



Kumo desuga.  
nanika? 7

著: 馬場翁

okina baba

イラスト: 輝竜司

tsukasa kiryu



# Kumo Desu ga, Nani ka?

(蜘蛛ですが、なにか?)

Chapter

301-330

Baba Okina

(馬場翁)

## Story Description:

The world where the Hero and the Demon King continue to oppose each other. The grand magic from the Hero and the Demon King cross over worlds and exploded in the classroom of a certain high school.

The students who died in the explosion will be reincarnated in a different world. The protagonist, who has the lowest reputation in the class, was reincarnated into a spider. Nevertheless, she adapted quickly to the present condition with strong willpower.

This is a story of she who has become a spider trying whatever she can to live.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Chapter 301: I suffered from a nightmare of not showing up for about half a year

Good morning. I have just woken up. Unfortunately, I can not use the adjective “refreshing” to describe the morning though.

The place where I spent the night sleeping, was in an undamaged house in the elf village. Just like the elf houses that would show up in stories, it is a tree house embedded inside a tree. Hmm, a tree house? Yup, well, calling it that ain’t wrong. Probably. Truly the joys of fantasy. Or rather, fairy tales. Normally when I sleep I shut myself in a My Home, but when I saw this thing, I simply wanted to try staying the night.

But unfortunately, I wasn’t able to sleep comfortably. Since it’s just after a battle and all. Thanks to the sea urchins and the triangular pyramid secret weapons of Potimas really doing a number on the place, this forest that was once overflowing with greenery, is now completely burnt. Basically, it stinks of smoke. Although this place is a considerable distance from the burnt areas, the smell still drifts in.

Besides, the original owner of this place was an elf. Just that alone makes me feels slightly nauseous. On top of that, I killed all the original residents myself as well. It’s not like I’m scared of ghosts or grudges from beyond or something, but I don’t feel good about it either.

In conclusion, rather than feeling like a nice and relaxing house, it was just too uncomfortable and no good. It might have given a different impression if I was just stopping by for the night during a trip, but the situation is what it is. I couldn’t sleep comfortably and it kinda felt like I had a bad dream too. Just when this huge job is finally over and all, I had thought I’d be able sleep well you know. Well, that “huge job” basically meant massacring the elves though, so I guess I wouldn’t be able to feel good on waking up after all.

The huge job of utterly destroying the elf village. The purpose of which was to kill Potimas of course. In general it’s his fault that this planet has gotten into such a messed-up state after all. Beating down the ringleader

means that the distortions will be corrected a little bit. That was the job this time. Well, the Demon King had a fateful connection with Potimas as well, so there was that aspect too though.

To be honest, I have mixed feelings about turning over the role of dealing with Potimas to the Demon King. During the battle with Potimas, the Demon King was able to accomplish her heart's desire and finish him off. However, the cost was huge. As a side-effect of the battle, it's become almost impossible for the Demon King to fight anymore. It's not only that. Or rather even more significantly, especially for me, is that the Demon King has only a short time left to live.

The Demon King assumed the role of Demon King because she felt that her life was coming to an end in the first place. Physically, the Demon King does have perennial youth, but her soul had almost reached its limits. She intuitively felt that she would die in the near future. That being said, that was from the perspective of the Demon King's ridiculously long life. From the perspective of a normal human, she would still have plenty of time left. And now her remaining time has fallen drastically, due to her battle with Potimas.

When I look at the Demon King now, it seems like it wouldn't be strange for her to die at any moment. When I see that, naturally I can't help but think about whether it really was a good idea to let her fight Potimas. Even though the Demon King requested it herself, maybe it would have been better if I had adamantly refused her instead.

But, at the same time, thanks to the Demon King taking on Potimas, because I was able to finish things without wasting my energy reserves, the calculations inside my head have also become rather pleasant. What was gained from the Demon King being at death's door, was a valuable victory, but that is only when measured mathematically. Even if I do say so myself, this aspect of me is garbage. I hate myself.

Hm, well, let's think about something else. What has happened in the past cannot be changed. I will contemplate what happened. But, I won't regret it. To regret something means that you are denying what you yourself had done after all. Whatever happens, you gotta accept it, then

use it as a source of encouragement to move on.

Now then. In that case, in order to move forwards maybe I should check up on the prisoners first.

The ones who became prisoners from this battle, starts with Yamada-kun's party. Then there's the reincarnators who were confined in the elf village in the name of protection. In addition there's sensei, the only surviving elf. The end. In other words, almost all of them are reincarnators. I damn well killed all the elves after all.

The elves are a race that use clones of Potimas as a base. Combining Potimas's clones with people who were reconstructed into elves or their descendants, is where the race of elves comes from. It sure seems that before the elves went around kidnapping the reincarnators that they were doing such kidnappings already. Then, those kidnapped people were reconstructed into elves, and had children with Potimas's clones. If just Potimas's clones were used then there would have been too much genetic imbalance after all. The children who are born that way are raised to be elves.

Qualitatively, that means that the majority of the elves are Potimas's blood relatives. Not so much a species as a clan of relatives? Well anyway, that's why it was better to eradicate the elves, one way or another. The exceptions are sensei and the half-elves. Sensei is one thing, but it would be a major pain to also take measures against the half-elves. My eyes are not omnipotent. There are places that they cannot reach for a start, and they can also miss things. While I think it's best to eradicate the elves as much as possible, dealing with all the ones outside of this elf village would be a major task. Missing some of them would be well, rather inevitable, right. So for that reason, I'll ignore the powerless ones with no connection to the elves. Therefore, I decided to also ignore the half-elf that was in Yamada-kun's party.

Apparently that half-elf had already died once though, but it doesn't count okay. She was revived so it's fine. It seems that Yamada-kun collapsed because of that, but it's not my problem! Not at all! What happens afterwards isn't my problem either!

Um, yeah. As for what will happen to Yamada-kun, I'm a bit worried but I guess it's no good to avoid it huh? It's probably my fault that Yamada-kun collapsed anyway. It was that, right? It's probably that he hit max level in Taboo, right? Oh my, what if he's already gone insane or something when I go visit him..... Ah, scary.

Or rather, do I really have to go explain this to the other reincarnators and stuff? Can't I just leave everything to oni-kun? Having to open my mouth to talk is troublesome. In a way, after taking down the elf village it's like I have an even more difficult quest waiting for me. So depressing. For now, I guess I'll just wait-and-see huh.

# Oshiete D-sensei! Lesson (3)

D「Welcome back to Oshiete D-se  
slice

M「Oh my? Oh my my! Your neck has dropped off so skillfully! Perhaps this could be used as a regular trick at parties? 」

D「It hurts so I shall refrain.」

M「Since you can talk with just your head, I guess your body is not needed then? Okay, finely chopped...」

D「Ahh! My beautiful body has become a corpse that cannot be shown without using mosaic censorship.」

M「Even though you have been reduced to just a head it is highly aggravating that you are so composed.」

D「I have perpetual youth and longevity after all.」

M「First of all, as a punishment for your mischief you shall be a freshly severed head until this corner ends. Okay?」

D「How callous.」

M「O K A Y ?」

D「Yes Ma'am!」

M「Very good.」

D「Starting once again, it is time for the third “Oshiete D-sensei”. Since I am a freshly severed head the tension is somewhat lowered.」

M「Of course it is. If it was not then it would not be punishment.」

D「Sigh. Nai wa. My perfect body has been left in such a cruel state. Nai wa.」

M「Hurry up and proceed.」

D「Yeah, yeah. Well, so that my beauty is unimpaired even as a freshly severed head, cameraman, please use an angle so that anything below my

neck does not show.」

M「There is no cameraman. If you do not hurry up and proceed how about I step on you?」

D「Well then, I shall pull myself together and get the show started. For the explanation this time, I wish to roughly cover the Past Arc. Well, to put the Past Arc in a single phrase, it is generally Potimas's fault! The end.」

M「How blunt.」

D「But it is practically true as well. The stage for the Past Arc is the same planet as the main story but from long ago. At that time it consisted of a scientific civilisation that was slightly superior to that of the current Earth. In that sense there was not much difference to Earth, but there was in fact two large differences. That was the existence of the stray angel Sariel, and the existence of the dragons.」

M「They were nearer the gods in other words.」

D「Indeed they were. That being said, only a few humans knew that Sariel was a god though, and the dragons also quietly passed the time in order to not provoke Sariel, so they did not have a big influence. As a mental image, perhaps you could consider it as being like Earth where Godzilla actually exists.」

M「I have a feeling that that is a bit off though.」

D「Well, I am not really sure what you mean, but for now imagine that there is this ridiculously strong creature there. The dragons cannot be beaten by mankind. If they are not provoked then they stay quiet. However, if you make a move on them then things become terrible. While that much is considered common knowledge, the fact that dragons are gods, or the fact that they came from outer space is not generally known. Such things might have been vaguely conveyed to the oddballs who worship the dragons though.」

M「There was a Dragon Religion, right?」

D「Yes. They probably went behind Sariel's back to instil the idea into people that the dragons are the supreme race. The people who took that



literally became believers.」

M「From the point of view of humans, dragons are higher ranked creatures after all. It is perhaps inevitable that they would gather a certain amount of religious faith.」

D「As a result of those beliefs, not just money but their entire fortunes were taken. Blech.」

M「Please do not say blech with a serious expression. It is frankly disgusting.」

D「How dare you use a word like disgusting against this freshly severed head of a transcendently beautiful girl!」

M「Just being a freshly severed head is disgusting.」

D「Sob sob.」

M(So irritating.)

D「Well anyway, that is enough about the dragons. The one who had an eye on the mysterious power of the dragons, was the Primary Perpetrator that everyone knows, Potimas Hyphenath. He was being consumed with not wanting to die, and was researching perpetual youth and longevity. But, of course such a thing could not be realised. But since he could not give up, he had an eye on the magecraft that the dragons used. And dareingly, he kidnapped a baby dragon. He began an analysis of the dragons.」

M「This incident was the trigger that led to the encounter between Sariel and Gyurie was it not.」

D「Yes. Gyurie the young dragon. And, Sariel the guardian of mankind. It was a chance meeting between these two. At first they were in opposition, or rather a relationship where Gyurie just one-sidedly criticised her, but before he noticed it that relationship changed.」

M「It was more or less entirely on Gyurie's side though.」

D「You should not point that out. Well, while those two were going through a slow and awkward stage, Potimas continued his investigation

into magecraft, and discovered the power that cannot be seen, MA Energy. The energy he had discovered, was in fact the life force of the planet. It is a dangerous energy to use, as it would push the planet into decline, and eventually cause the planet to collapse. However, even while knowing that, he still made the existence of MA Energy known to the world. The reason being, is that if MA Energy is used, then it would be possible for mankind to evolve. The evolved humans would have elevated physical abilities, and prolonged life spans. Indeed, it was a glimpse of the perpetual youth and longevity that Potimas was seeking.」

M「That being said, it was neither perennial youth nor longevity, and what Potimas was seeking still seemed a long way off.」

D「Indeed. For that reason, Potimas had to perform even more research. However, his repeated and cruel experiments on living people were eventually discovered, and he became an internationally wanted criminal. His research had required an enormous amount of capital, and dependable facilities. Because he had to obtain those no matter what, he required the assistance of various countries. For that reason, he announced the revolutionary energy called MA Energy, and using that as bait he was able to receive support from various countries behind closed doors. He hid the inconvenient aspects about MA Energy.」

M「How dirty. Truly, how dirty.」

D「Presumably the reason why he also announced the method for evolving mankind, was not simply to grasp the hearts of the rich, but perhaps also with the goal of clinical experiments.」

M「I guess all you can say is “as expected of Potimas”.」

D「Naturally, the dragons did not stay silent about this. Of course the dragons knew the truth about MA Energy, so they immediately informed mankind that it must not be used. However, mankind did not comply with that. As a result, the dragons set out to exterminate mankind.」

M「That is how dragons are.」

D「Indeed, that bunch look down on all other creatures after all. For them it was no different to performing pest extermination. Even though

they themselves are just vermin who came from outer space.」

M「The discussion is digressing.」

D「Oops. Well then, we should return to the story. Mankind had no way of opposing the dragons, and they sustained heavy damage, but this is where everyone's goddess Sariel took action. She saved mankind from the evil influence of the dragons. Whee, so awesome.」

M「Indeed.」

D「Well, the ones at fault were the humans who were using up the planet's life force like crazy, so from the standpoint of having to safeguard the planet no matter what, you could say that Sariel's actions were both right and wrong. However, while Sariel's actions made the situation more complicated when seen objectively, from the point of view of mankind she was surely their saviour. If Sariel had not been there then all joking aside mankind could have gone extinct.」

M「Certainly. When Sariel's actions are seen from various angles, they look completely different I guess.」

D「From the point of view of mankind she was their saviour. From the point of view of the dragons she was a hopelessly faulty angel who was protecting the insects. I guess you could say that the dragons were completely fed up. Serves them right.」

M「If they had only cried themselves to sleep in frustration they could have been loveable.」

D「It is futile to expect such things from that lot. Indeed, the dragons made the situation worse. They snatched up the remaining MA Energy and fled into space – how outrageous! That lot stole something completely outrageous.」

M「You simply wanted to say that, right?」

D「They truly did run off with something completely outrageous though. That started the countdown to the planet's collapse. The only way to stop that was to replenish the lost energy. And, then method that was considered for doing so, was to offer up Sariel as a sacrifice. And of course,

the one to propose this method, was the Primary Perpetrator that everyone knows, Potimas. Not only that, but this method would not actually succeed, and Potimas was contriving to run off with the energy gained by decomposing Sariel.」

M「How dirty.」

D「Mankind chose to repay the kindness that was received in saving them with ingratitude. At that moment, the Goddess of Salvation appeared! In other words, me!」

M「Salvation (LOL) indeed. Yeah, as if.」

D「That is not the case at all-l. A proper path for salvation was in fact provided-d. The Primary Perpetrator for the current situation was Potimas after all-l.」

M「It is frustrating that you are not technically wrong.」

D「Upon my magnificent arrival, life-support was provided for the planet and Sariel, and Sariel was used as the nexus to activate the System. This System would recover the power inside the souls of living creatures upon death, and that would be used to supplement the lost MA Energy. Also, so that it could be recovered again and again, with this kind plan people would be reborn on this planet after dying.」

M「How is that “kind”.....」

D「The power inside souls increases due to fighting. For that reason, the people of that world will continue to fight. Until they have finished repaying the debt.」

M「Hearing it that way, it sounds like gladiator slavery.」

D「It is somewhat similar. And so, that’s the rough flow of events in the Past Arc.」

M「Wait a moment please. You have left out an important matter.」

D「What would those be?」

M「Why do you think you have been turned into a freshly severed head? Is it not the case that the reason why the general Primary Perpetrator in



Potimas Hyphenath was deliberately left alive was because you wanted it? If you had not said something strange to Gyurie, he would have quickly killed Potimas and that planet should have been saved in a much nicer way. Why did you do something like that?」

D「Eh? Obviously because it would be more interesting that w...  
slice

M「Well then, this is it for today. Good-bye.」

# Chapter 302: Piles of corpses everywhere

There was a mountain of corpses stacked up at the place I went to. No, seriously. This is not a metaphor, this is real.

This mountain of corpses comes from the Imperial Army that invaded the elf village and has since become a shadow of its former self. The Imperial Army that Natsume-kun led came this far, fought with the elves, and then on top of that they were attacked in a pincer movement by the Demon King Army, went through hell and collapsed. Of course there are many survivors, but in military terms given the amount of casualties you could say that they were annihilated. When the number of killed and wounded exceed 30% is that considered be annihilated again? Or was is 40%? Well, either way it's certain that they took heavy damage.

The unit that was directly with Natsume-kun, all fought with normal opponents such as Yamada-kun's party and sensei, so they have somewhat less damage. However, the other units got stuck with having to take on Potimas's secret weapons, so it seems that some of those units were literally annihilated. Talking of the secret weapons though, unlike the sea urchins and so on that I took on, or the Gloria or whatever things that the Demon King took on, those units took on the mass production weapons. The ones that I beat up along the way. Nonetheless, while they might as well have been scrap as far as I was concerned, from the normal standards of the people of this world they were a terrible threat. So consider a weapon so strong that normal humans cannot contend with them, and then consider mass producing them enough that they come out in hordes. Yep. Most people would die from that.

The outcome, is this mountain of corpses here. It appears that the remaining Imperial soldiers and Mera's subordinates spent the whole night going around the battlefield collecting them. Here I am complaining about not being able to sleep comfortably, while those guys spent the whole night after a battle doing work huh. Umm, sorry about that. Sorry for asking for more than my fair share. Simply being able to sleep was good working conditions. Soldiers in fantasy worlds fight until they die,

then the ones who didn't die are made to spend all night working – the ultimate black business. Hello everyone who yearns for fantasy worlds! Why don't you become a soldier in a fantasy world as well?

.....Somehow, I now really pity them. From the start the soldiers of the Imperial Army were considered to be disposable anyway, so them becoming like this is within that assumption though. They were composed of the soldiers from rotten Imperial nobles that were summoned by Natsume-kun and that would be okay to kill, but even if the leaders are rotten the soldiers themselves committed no sins. I'm sure that some of them simply wanted to slurp up the juicy rewards that were being dangled in front of them though.

Well, they have properly fulfilled their roles now. Thus, I think they should be able to hold an appropriate memorial service in compensation. All the same, they wouldn't be able to bring these corpses all the way back to the Empire like this, so I guess they'll take back things that belonged to the deceased, or their remains from cremation. Either way, they gotta be properly buried of course.

In contrast, there's no elf corpses here. They have all vanished into my stomach. Or to be more precise, they were divided amongst my clones and eaten. Having done so, have I given them a proper burial in my own way? After all, in the natural world it is good manners to eat what you kill, right. Those corpses were eaten by me, and will become my flesh and blood. Ahh, how wonderful. I'm sure that Potimas would cry tears of joy to know that his own relatives would become the flesh and blood of a god.

「Good morning, Shiro-sama.」

While I was gazing at the mountain of corpses, Mera approached and greeted me.

「Have you had breakfast already? If not then it can be prepared for you though.」

He seemed unnaturally keen to invite me to breakfast. Ah, no. Mera is attentive to various details anyway, so normally it wouldn't feel strange for him to call out to me like this, but right now he has the position of being

an army commander. His subordinates are still in the area, and since he and I officially have the same rank it is a bit suspicious of him to be so attentive. Mera is someone who can properly distinguish public and private matters after all. He wouldn't normally lower himself so blatantly in front of his subordinates. Hey Mera-kun... I certainly hope not, but you better not be worried that I might want to eat these corpses or something, right?

If I opened my eyes to see him properly I'm sure he would be looking at me reproachfully. Perhaps he sensed the mood, as Mera's eyes began to swim a bit. To an ordinary person it would be too slight to notice, but you can't fool my eyes. You bastard. Well, whatever. It's certainly the case that I haven't had breakfast anyway, so I'll do as Mera suggests and have them prepare me some. If I don't at least do that much then I won't be able to settle down.

「Fwoaaahhhhh!」

Just when I was about to nod in acknowledgement, a strange creature gave off a strange sound while making strange movements towards me. It was so strange that I stopped moving for a bit. But, Mera beside me quickly responded. He chopped the strange creature that was approaching on the head with his hand.

「Gofwah!?!」

The strange creature was knocked to the ground by Mera's relatively serious hand chop, and squatted while vomiting blood, but eh!? Amazingly, the strange creature took yet another strange pose to stop its collapse from Mera's chop. People call that pose, the dogeza.

「What is the meaning of this?」

Seeming half angry and half bewildered, Mera began to question the strange creature.

「Please, please make me your apprentice!」

This strange creature is saying something strange again. I have no idea what it is saying.



Mera has a bewildered expression saying he has no idea what is going on. Well, of course right? If someone who you'd just riposted suddenly asked to be your apprentice you'd go "huh?" as well right. That request was probably said to me, but since Mera doesn't know the circumstances of course he'd have no idea what's going on. Even though I know the circumstances I have no idea what's going either, okay. This guy gives off such an extreme impression.

Somehow, I feel that I shouldn't get too involved with this strange creature. My instincts are flashing an emergency signal saying "You must not get involved". Just what is this. Somehow, yeah, somehow, I can't put it into words.

Using my threads I bind the strange creature which is still doing a dogeza. Now that it can't move I speak out to Mera.

「Let's go.」

「Umm, are you sure?」

I strongly nod in confirmation towards the still bewildered Mera. It's best to leave this thing alone. Or rather, that's all I can do!

I leave the strange creature like that, and begin to walk off in order to eat breakfast. While Mera is glancing towards the strange creature, I walk off without hesitation, so Mera quickly runs after me. Behind me I felt like I heard something like "Pl, please wait!", but I'm sure it's just my imagination. The strange voice merely passed over my ears as some kind of unintelligible sound. My brain cannot be allowed to recognise that as meaningful words. Before I've even met the reincarnators, I somehow feel worn-out. Nai wa.

# Chapter 303: Breakfast with the early rising vampire

The place where Mera led me towards, was a treehouse like the one I had slept in. The Demon King Army does have tents and so on for making camp, but even so it feels more comfortable to have a place with a proper roof after all. While one section of the region has become unusable, there's still plenty of serviceable housing left in the sprawling elf village. Since the residents are no longer here, there's no reason not to use them.

「Oh? Good morning.」

Inside the treehouse, vampire girl was elegantly eating breakfast. There were various dishes laid out on wooden plates, perhaps from this house. The volume of food was modest for breakfast, but you would never get bored just looking at the wide variety. Bread, salad, fruits, small pieces of steak and scrambled eggs. Vampire girl was using a knife and fork in a refined manner to eat the luxurious food that you wouldn't expect to see on the morning after a war. Are you a noble!? Ah, she was actually born a genuine noble.

「Prepare some for two more.」

Mera gave those instructions to a subordinate inside. It seems that this place is for the exclusive use of serving food to commissioned officers and the like. The person who received the order quickly went inside. The kitchen is probably inside.

But then, “for two more” means that Mera is also going to eat with us? Somehow, it seems an incredibly long time since I last saw vampire girl and Mera eat together at a table. Mera is more or less vampire girl's attendant after all. There's a strange feeling of “what's this guy doing eating together with his master?” Since we normally ate together during the journey from the country of Sariera to the demon territories, it's a bit too late to be bothering about that though. Well, Mera actually has a higher ranking when considering things officially though.

Hm? Putting it that way wouldn't it actually be vampire girl who is out of place then? Mera and I are both proper army commanders, but vampire girl has no role, right? I wonder what the rank and file in the Demon King Army who don't know the situation think about that? Hmm, well, considering that she's boldly receiving the treatment of a commissioned officer, I guess the common soldiers can presume various things?

While I was thinking about such pointless things, Mera had pulled out a chair for me to sit on. Woah!? I didn't notice until I sat down! What an amazing escort job! So this is the power of a capable man!

After I had sat down, Mera also took a seat. Now that I look at him closely, there's signs of fatigue on Mera's face. After the combat with the elves was over, for him to then spend the whole night dealing with the aftermath of the battle, he would be tired indeed. It seems he didn't get to eat properly either. Otherwise I'm sure that Mera wouldn't try to eat together with vampire girl and I. He'd probably have refrained and eaten by himself later.

Since there's nobody else but vampire girl eating here, I guess they're all busy working or are tired and sleeping or something. It feels really odd to be eating an elegant breakfast early in the morning with two vampires though.

「Ariel-san is asleep. Kyouya-kun is guarding her. I don't know about Felmina.」

Perhaps my thoughts were obvious, as vampire girl informed me about what the others were currently doing. However, she doesn't know about Felmina-chan. Since this is Felmina-chan we're talking about I'm sure she's busily working, but her presence is as thin as ever. Or rather, Felmina-chan is my subordinate at least, so wouldn't it be bad if I'm not aware of what she's up to? It's okay! There's no problem! Almost certainly, perhaps, maybe.

「Oh, also, Kusama-kun went to visit the other reincarnators. Maybe by now they're eating breakfast together or something?」

Kusama-kun, ah yeah, he was around wasn't he. Kusama-kun the ninja

protege of the pope who can't conceal himself. As for why Kusama-kun has the unique skill of ninja of all things, it's probably under the cheap motive of Kusama-kun having the given name of "Shinobu". D would be quite liable to do such a thing.

Ah, I see. For Kusama-kun it's been a long time since he could meet again with his classmates. Does it feel like a class reunion? In my case, I don't really feel like wanting to go out of my way to renew old friendships, but I wonder how vampire girl and oni-kun feel about that?

「What?」

I'm sure there's no way that she'd be able to understand my question though, as vampire girl's sullenness shows through in her voice. Ah, right. Come to think of it vampire girl didn't have a particularly good impression of her previous life, right? Well, considering that she is here eating food like this, maybe that's clear.

Nonetheless, there will be compulsory participation in the briefing session for the reincarnators after this. For oni-kun as well. I'll have Mera take over guarding the Demon King during that time. Since right now, the Demon King is significantly weakened after all. I must have reliable people guarding her. This does mean that Mera will have another job forced onto him after working all night, but this is one thing that I can't leave to anyone else.

Ah, that reminds me. Thinking about the reincarnators, how is Yamada-kun doing? Perhaps it's about time that he woke up? Does vampire girl know anything?

「Yamada-kun.」

「Huh? .....Let's see. Ahh. I think he is still asleep. As far as I know at least, since I have not heard anything about him being awake.」

Since we've been together for so long, even vampire girl has become able to infer my thinking, but she still needs to ponder from time to time. It seems that this time as well that she couldn't immediately understand the meaning of my brief question, and was hesitant to speak. Your ability to comprehend is still lacking. Follow oni-kun's good example.



「Rather than him, it might be Hasebe-san who is worst off, with the brainwashing having being undone. Since she is apparently extremely confused.」

Ah. That is true, isn't it. Amongst the reincarnators who were brainwashed by Natsume-kun, Ooshima-kun is fine since she cancelled the brainwashing on her own, but the other one, Hasebe-san, has been completely brainwashed all this time. Due to Natsume-kun's death the brainwashing has been undone, so she should have returned to sanity? Ah. Maybe it would be better to erase the memories as an after care service.

「Since she was apparently forcibly put to sleep, if you are worried about her then maybe go visit her later on?」

Let's do so. But, before that, food! I consume the delicious food that was brought over. Mmm. It's just after the war yet I'm indulging myself. The privilege of being a big shot eh. Being able to have such a delicious meal even though I didn't work all night. Ahh, I've sure gotten a cushy job.

Forget about Mera next to me, or Felmina-chan who is still working somewhere, or oni-kun who has been guarding the Demon King without being able to get a wink of sleep. Everyone, you must all keep on working hard.

# Chapter 304: The reincarnators

After we finished eating, we all went over to the Demon King's place. The Demon King is probably still sleeping, but this is in order to collect oni-kun who is guarding her. When we go meet the reincarnators, oni-kun's communication skills will be indispensable. There'll be a significant difference in the chances of a successful mission depending on whether oni-kun is there or not.

So here we are at oni-kun's place. I'll have oni-kun switch with Mera. I hadn't explained anything beforehand, but I guess this much is to be expected from oni-kun, as he figured out what I wanted to say with just a gesture from me. Thus, I was able to smoothly take out oni-kun, and in exchange I'll leave guarding the Demon King to Mera. At the time, Mera made a face that somewhat suggested "I still gotta work huh" but, yeah, I'll pretend I never saw it. Regardless of whatever you think deep down, I like how you perfectly complete any jobs given to you due to your strong sense of responsibility. It's terribly convenient.

Now then, the preparations are complete, so let's march off to where the reincarnators are huh..... Do I really have to march off...? I feel reluctant with having to meet the reincarnators who know Wakaba Hiiro. Just that alone is enough to make me feel reluctant, yet on top of that I'll have no alternative but to open my mouth and talk in order to explain things then huh. What's with this punishment game? Ahh, I don't wanna go. I don't wanna go I but gotta go. Do I really have to?

Now that I think about it really closely, I don't really have an obligation to explain the situation to the reincarnators now do I? How about I simply keep quiet and let them stumble around hopelessly without understanding the situation? Can I, or can't I? I can!

「Shiro-san, are you perhaps thinking about something bad?」

Gnn! You bastard, are you an esper huh!? Ughhh. Sigh. It can't be helped. I received a retort from oni-kun already anyway, so I should resolve myself and press on huh.

And so here we are at the treehouse where the reincarnators are held. I feel a bit guilty for shoving this large group of reincarnators into a single place which feels a bit cramped, but this way makes it easier to manage them after all. Inside they should have been separated by gender after all, so there shouldn't have been any problems. There's guards properly posted as well. What if it's consensual? Not my problem.

Perhaps it's because of my mood, but the door feels heavy on opening. Ahh, it's because once I open this door the reincarnators will be there. I'm depressed, though not enough to kill me.

On opening the door, there was Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun tied up with rope.

Slam. Hm? Hmm? Hmmm!?

I unconsciously closed the door, but what was that? An illusion? Is there someone here who is skilled enough to make even me see illusions then!? In order to check whether or not I had misjudged things or something, I opened the door slooowly once again. Sure enough, there was Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun bound together with rope.

.....Yup. Well, yup. Erm, yup.

Well, the fact that they've been bound against their will is fair enough. Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun are pawns of the Divine Word Religion. Kusama-kun is a culpable in the attack on the elf village, so he's part of our gang in other words, while Ogiwara-kun allowed himself be caught by the elves and was a spy that leaked out internal information. From the point of view of the other reincarnators they're like traitors, and so it's not like I can't understand why they would be captured for interrogation.

So that much is fine, but why have the two of them been bound together such like they're almost embracing each other? Wouldn't you normally bind them back-to-back in such a situation? Isn't the orientation reversed? Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun are both really trying hard to face away from each other, but their faces are still touching. If the angle was a bit different they'd be close enough to kiss you know.

Also, why are the girls gazing at these guys with enraptured expressions?

It's the sort of mood where if someone had a camera they'd be taking photos or something. The only normal ones are sensei, the former class-rep Kudou-san, and finally Kushitani-san. Ah, no. While sensei is saying "doing this sort of thing is wrong!" and covering her face, she's glancing at them between the gaps in her fingers. Kudou-san is saying incomprehensible stuff like "It's not working. It's acceptable in 2D but it fails in 3D!", while lamenting. In conclusion, Kushitani-san is the only normal one!

Erm, what, is, this?

「Wakaba-san! Help!」

While I was taken aback by this mysterious scene, I met Kusama-kun's eyes, and at that moment he plead for help. He really must be at his wit's end, as he's practically crying. Wait, don't drag me into this!?

At Kusama-kun's shout, almost everyone in the place focused their eyes on me. Stop! Don't look at me when there's such a strange scene going on!? Look away!

「No way.」

「Wakaba-san?」 「Eh, but...」

「Is it really her?」

The reincarnators whisper such things to each other while looking this way. Amongst them, one of them takes a step forwards as their representative. It's the former class-rep Kudou-san.

「I wonder if it's okay to say long time no see? You are Wakaba-san, right?」

I'm not her actually, but if I say that here then the conversation would get rather complicated so I keep quiet and nod. When I nod to confirm, sensei becomes noticeably agitated.

「By the way, the person behind, is Sasajima-kun right?」

「Yeah, that's right. Long time no see, class-rep.」

「Indeed.」

In response to oni-kun's calm greeting, Kudou-san's stiff shoulders sag, as if she was dumbfounded. However, I guess she quickly gathered herself again, and turned to the last person.

「By a process of elimination, you are Negishi-san then?」

「Yes, that's right.」

When vampire girl affirms, the reincarnators behind Kudou-san become noisy. From what I can gather from their conversation, well, they're basically talking about how they're shocked at the change in vampire girl. Kudou-san claps her hands at the noisy reincarnators to quieten them.

「Well then? What is your purpose in coming here?」

Openly cautious, Kudou-san asked us that. Well, I can understand that caution. The reincarnators who were being held captive in the elf village are at least aware that the Imperial Army attacked. However, they know nothing about what happened afterwards, as they were isolated inside my other dimension, and then before they realised it they were being held captive like this after all. Of course they would worry about what will happen to them and also what the heck had happened. In a situation where they didn't know anything, suddenly three new reincarnators appear, so considering the timing of course you'd be cautious. Or otherwise, you'd be bewildered I guess. Kudou-san, also Tagawa-kun and Kushitani-san, and also Shinohara-san are all cautious. The others seem to be really bewildered.

「Please relax. We have no intention of causing harm.」

Oni-kun spoke before I could.

「Sensei might not be able to believe us, but we are not your enemies. Please believe that much at least.」

In response to oni-kun's earnest appeal, the place becomes quiet. Some of the reincarnators are making glances at sensei. However, sensei doesn't notice that at all, and keeps opening and closing her mouth in confusion. I think she's trying to say something but can't get the words out.

「Today, we came in order to talk. There is something that we must talk



to you about.」

Oni-kun surveys the room while making that announcement. There was nobody who denied him. As I had guessed, bringing oni-kun was the right thing to do.

「Umm, excuse me. Before that, could you please untie us?」

「Idiot! Read the mood!」

In response to Kusama-kun's pitiful request, Ogiwara-kun remonstrates him.

「.....Rather than stand around, let's sit down and talk.」

Perhaps Kusama-kun's request broke the tension in the room, as Kudou-san made that proposal while relaxing her shoulders. Unfortunately for Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun, they were neglected and were simply left as they were.

Kudou-san: Although it was done as part of my fujoshi religion, since only 2D interested me, 3D is outside my area of expertise. However, since there's obviously no 2D materials in this elf village, the other girls who followed my fujoshi religion focused on 3D, so what's with this incomprehensible situation where I'm being left out despite being the founder. Just how did this happen?

# Chapter 305: Reincarnator conference

The treehouse that I'm in has four stories. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to refer to it as a house hollowed out of a tree that has four stories? Please don't worry about that aspect though. Anyway, the first floor is a dining room. There are several tables arranged, with chairs placed around them correspondingly. However, right now the tables have been pushed to the side of the walls and just the chairs are being used, with everyone sitting wherever they like. As it would be hard for us to have a conversation with the tables there, Endou-san gave instructions to move them out of the way.

The reincarnators are sitting in a semi-circle with me at the center, waiting for the discussion to begin. Yep, I'm at the center! Da heck! It would be better for oni-kun to be at the center! Until just now oni-kun had been doing most of the talking on our side, so it would have been better to continue like that! Despite that, oni-kun nonchalantly yielded the center to me, took a step back and sat down to my side. His eyes are telling me – you should be the one to speak.

It's okay. You don't have to be attentive over such strange things, okay! Ughh. This is why serious guys are no good! Guys who are strict about the rules are annoyingly inflexible at times like this.

Using Fluoroscopy, I look at oni-kun who is seated beside me without moving my head. He's not budging an inch. He has no intention of moving until I start talking.

What a pain. I want oni-kun to help, but I look at the seat opposite him as well. There, sitting somewhat sullenly, is vampire girl. She doesn't show any sign of moving either. This is hopeless. Rather, if I forced her to talk it would likely just make things even more complicated.

I look ahead. There with her arms folded and also her legs crossed is Kudou-san, who is looking at me. In her past life she had a sharp expression, but even in this world Kudou-san is a beauty with slit eyes. If that Kudou-san were to fix her eyes on someone with a glare, it sure would

be intimidating. Does she have the Intimidation skill?

Then, sitting next to Kudou-san is sensei, who is restless and won't calm down. Her gaze is darting here and there, with her body moving around to match. I'm not bothered by the reincarnators being tense due to having almost no clue as to what's going on. However, maybe she can't settle down because she knows some strange information so has no idea as to what's about to happen?

From the point of view of the reincarnators, they shouldn't be aware of anything really. Since it was said that we were going to discuss things, I can understand them wanting to sink their teeth into the explanation. But, from sensei's point of view, the situation is strange. It seems that sensei knew that vampire girl and oni-kun belonged to the Demon King's side. But just when she thought that the Imperial Army had been the ones attacking, suddenly there's two visiting reincarnators who should be on the Demon King's side. Well, that would certainly be confusing. Sensei had been knocked unconscious in the midst of the fight with Natsume-kun for a start, so there's too many things that she's worried about such as the how did the battle end, why are two people from the Demon King's side here, and so on, so maybe she can't gather her thoughts. On top of that, because that shithead Potimas had indoctrinated her with all sorts of weird stuff, she's not able to judge what is correct and what is incorrect. Precisely because she has some knowledge, unlike the other reincarnators, she's very confused.

It might be just as well that Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun aren't here, in a certain sense. Those two aren't here. Yamada-kun hasn't woken up yet anyway, and it seems that Ooshima-kun is attending to Yamada-kun. Hasebe-san was extremely disordered, so she was forcibly put to sleep. Those three had continued to fight after sensei had fallen, so they do know some of what happened afterwards. In particular Ooshima-kun, who hadn't fallen unconscious even to the end. They could be called participants. Unlike the other reincarnators who were simply dragged into the situation, those three know quite a lot more. If they were also here during the explanation, it would inevitably become stormy.

Except for Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun who are tied up, the reincarnators have various different attitudes, but they all have a posture of waiting for me to talk. Apart from sensei, it feels like they're willing to listen calmly. While Yamada-kun and his party aren't here, this is the perfect chance to win over the other reincarnators!

Despite that though, I feel like I'm surrounded by enemies on all sides. On one side is oni-kun who is as motionless as a statue. On the other side is vampire girl who is simply being sullen. In front of me is Kudou-san who is pressuring me to begin the explanation already. Sensei is occasionally glancing at me without calming down. The other reincarnators are simply staring at me.

Mind if I flee? No good? Do I really have to explain things while having so many people staring at me? Still no good? Oh, okay.

Err, err. Erm, at a time like this should I start with a conventional greeting? How about whether today is a lucky day? That somehow feels wrong.

I mean, just where should I start my explanation? The reincarnators basically know nothing at all, so I gotta explain everything from A to Z. But, what is "A" then? Maybe I should start from explaining this world, or rather how the System came to be? Ermm, but that would be such a bolt from the blue for the reincarnators, and wouldn't they want to know something else right now? So what do the reincarnators want to know the most right now? Thinking about that, yeah, I guess it would be something like this?

「First of all, at present you are prisoners of the demons.」

「Huh?」

Kudou-san made an astonished looking expression for a moment, and then her face became grim. The other reincarnators were also making noises, and started becoming flustered. Ah, this is the sort of development where things have been misunderstood.

「Silence!」

Oni-kun stood up, and clapped his hands together to quieten the reincarnators.

「Everything is okay. Even though you are prisoners, it's not like anything bad is going to happen. Rather than prisoners, it's actually more like protective care after all. Please don't worry about that. I said this just earlier, but we have no intention of harming any of you. Therefore, even if it sounds strange please at least listen until the end.」

In response to oni-kun's sincere words, the noisy reincarnators began to calm down. While Tagawa-kun and Kushitani-san are being cautious while still being calm, the others more or less seem like they're willing to listen. Phew. Well done oni-kun!

Even though they've been living amongst the elves, sure enough "demons" sound like the "enemy of humans" and something to be afraid of huh. Suddenly being told that they were the prisoners of the demons would confuse them. Ack, I blundered. I'm glad that oni-kun interceded.

「Umm, so what exactly is this about? Does this mean that you are supporting the demons then?」

Kudou-san asked while clutching her forehead in her hand. Normally I would simply just nod in confirmation here, but even I can tell that simply nodding would be so uninformative that it would be bad. I gotta, I gotta say something! Ahh! Uhh! Ohh!

.....Grr, I really hadn't wanted to do this, but a few sacrifices can't be avoided. I guess I'll throw away my pride for the moment, and just do it. Switchover.

「That is correct. Incidentally, all three of us here are not human.」

I open my eyes while talking. So that nothing strange would happen when they look at my eyes, I put my Evil Eyes off completely, but even so the reincarnators gasp when they see my creepy eyes. Incidentally, noticing that my ambiance had changed also made vampire girl and oni-kun gasp, but I ignore them.

「The three of us are cooperating with the Demon King in order to

achieve a particular objective. I shall explain about that later. I will review the current situation first.」

The words come out smoothly and fluently. Despite the fact that they're coming from my own mouth, I'm surprised myself. I have memories that are not my own. Those are the memories of Wakaba Hiiro, D's temporary guise. Using those memories as a base, I am reproducing Wakaba Hiiro's personality. This is Wakaba Hiiro Mode. Because I've entered this mode, I can put into words the things that I am thinking just like that. After all, since Wakaba Hiiro is not bad at speaking or anything of the sort, it would be more strange for her to not be able to talk. But with this mode, to put it simply it means that I am actually imitating D. Me of all people, is imitating that D! What a, what a terrible disgrace! This is why I didn't want to do this! But, unless I do this I cannot speak properly! Therefore, I'll endure it.

「First of all, I believe that you will have already heard that the Imperial Army was invading the elf village. Our Demon King Army attacked the elf village from behind the Imperial Army. The Imperial Army led by Natsume-kun was a decoy.」

At my words, the reincarnators start to become noisy. Amongst them, sensei's expression looks extremely bad.

「About that matter, could I also hear about it in detail?」

At that time, a person came down the stairs from the second story. Ack. So he came huh.

Appearing with bad timing, was Yamada-kun who was supposed to have been unconscious and sleeping.

# Chapter 306: Encounter

His complexion is obviously poor, but, Yamada-kun walks forwards with a steady gait. Perhaps this is to expected of the holder of the Divine Protection of Heaven skill, as Yamada-kun was able to turn up with good timing for him and bad timing for me. Ahh, the discussion is going to get even more complicated.

「It's been a long time eh, Wakaba-sa...n?」

Yamada-kun said that while looking at me. Why did he phrase it as a question? At the start he was glaring at me strongly, yet now he is making a somewhat dubious expression. Is there something on my face? Well, my eyes have lots of pupils though.

「Well, never mind. More importantly, I want to be included in this discussion. I have the right to do so, don't I?」

After lightly shaking his head, he continued with that. I'm not really sure, but it seems that there's something bothering him. Well, as far as I'm concerned he's already here so what's done is done. It's not like I couldn't drive him out, but that would be troublesome in its own way anyway. Basically, the moment Yamada-kun got here the situation became troublesome either way.

「Go ahead, suit yourself.」

What's done is done so I give out a half-hearted affirmation. I don't forget to put out a “you're not welcome” aura.

「Thank you.」

Yet despite that, he doesn't pay attention to that, and rather Yamada-kun accepts it as if it was a challenge. Ooshima-kun suddenly makes a move, bringing a chair for Yamada-kun. Yamada-kun sat on that chair while thanking Ooshima-kun, and then Ooshima-kun got a chair for herself and sat down next to Yamada-kun. I wonder why? Why did some of the girls seem to make a soft “Oh-ho” like sigh on seeing that?

After Yamada-kun sat on his chair, he then deliberately checked over the



surroundings. His eyes stopped at several locations, then finally pointed back at me. Hrm, tsk. Can't be helped.

「10th Army, come out.」

In response to my directive, several white clothed people appear in the room. Most of the reincarnators were shocked the moment they saw those figures. These white clothed people, are the soldiers of the 10th Army that I command in the Demon King Army. They were members who are especially good at spying, who I had assigned to covertly watch over the reincarnators. Yamada-kun had spotted that they were here it seems, since his eyes had paused on them when scanning the room.

Oh, now that I look again, Felmina-chan is right in the middle of them isn't she. Girl, you should have the title of vice-commander of the 10th Army, so why are you doing minor stuff like this then? Perhaps Felmina-chan had noticed my curiosity, as a vein twitched on her forehead in anger. It's not like I literally saw such a thing, more like I got that impression. It gave off the feeling of saying something like "because you were asleep!". Yup, I'm honestly sorry about that.

「Leave this place. Until I have further instructions, get some rest.」

In accordance with my order, the white clothed people soundlessly vanished on the spot. I could hear someone say "ninja". Yep, to be honest I think that my soldiers in the 10th Army are better ninjas than Kusama-kun. Ah, amongst the white clothed people that left, only Felmina-chan went up to the third floor it seems. That reminds me, Hasebe-san who was confused and forced to sleep was there wasn't she. Certainly someone needs to keep a lookout on her. I think it's wrong in various ways for an executive member like Felmina-chan to do such a thing, but I won't say anything.

「Who were they?」

Yamada-kun asked that with a grim expression.

「They are soldiers of the 10th Army in the Demon King Army. I had put them in charge of guarding and escorting the reincarnators.」

At my words, the reincarnators became noisy. Well naturally, since they were right next to each other yet they never noticed them. The ones who noticed, were just the Tagawa-kun and Kushitani-san pair huh? I had thought sensei had noticed as well, but since she is staring in amazement it seems that she hadn't noticed.

「They gotta be the elites of the Demon King Army huh.」

No, they're rank and file soldiers. Ah, no, well, due to my Spartan training they're especially strong compared to the other soldiers in the army, so maybe it's not wrong to call them the elites then huh? Well, it's minor difference either way. They're rank and file, mere rank and file.

Yamada-kun still looks unwell. He might have considered the difference in strength between them, on seeing the white clothed lot's movements. Being the Hero, Yamada-kun's power is, well, at least nothing like the common masses. But, while you could say that he's strong, that's only strong in the sense that he fits into the category called common sense. He falls a long way short of how the Demon King and I used to be, and on the contrary he's no match for vampire girl and oni-kun here either. If things went badly for him, even the white clothed guys from just now might be able to beat him with some luck. One-on-one, I doubt they could win, but with two of them perhaps they could find a route to victory. That kind of level. Despite that though, due to the convenience of the Divine Protection of Heaven skill, he would probably be able to achieve more than his raw ability might indicate.

「Well then? You used Yuugo, Natsume, as bait and invaded this place. What for?」

Yamada-kun throws a straight question right at me. Uh, hmm. So he actually asked that huh.

I glance at sensei. I know all too well. This is not a topic that I can avoid. However, if I talk about this then sensei's position will definitely go from bad to worse. It will, but there's no way I can't talk about it after all.

「The leader of the elves, Potimas Hyphenath, is the enemy of the world. His existence brings harm to the world, and in order to subjugate him the

Demon King Army and the Divine Word Religion collaborated together, leading to the offensive on this occasion.」

At my words, sensei's jaw dropped down in amazement. That face indicates that she finds this to be incomprehensible. In comparison, Yamada-kun took my words surprisingly calmly. Next to him, Ooshima-kun is half astonished and half consenting, with a delicate grimace on her face, so it doesn't seem like she knew about Potimas beforehand.

「Firstly, the elves in this world are existences that have threatened the world since long ago. Publicly the elves are taking action to stop the conflict between the humans and the demons, in order to achieve true world peace, but that is merely camouflage in order to conceal their hidden side. They are secretly exploiting the life force of this planet, and are an evil influence that is shortening the life of this planet. Those few who know the truth have repeatedly warned Potimas Hyphenath and the rest to cease such actions, but those warnings were ignored. Finally, when this planet's life span reached a critical stage, strong measures in the form of an attack is what brought about the current situation.」

Suddenly faced with the discussion taking on a momentous scale, the reincarnators became noisy.

「What a minute! If what you said is correct, then what's happening with this planet?」

Kudou-san presses me for an answer while half standing up. Seeing is believing. I activate magecraft, projecting how this planet looks. Showing overhead is a three-dimensional vision of the current planet, looking something like a globe. Shown there, is the collapse of half of the planet.

「This is the current state of the planet.」

Stunned silence. That is the main reaction here. Apart from vampire girl and oni-kun who knew about it beforehand, it seems that this image had a devastating impact. I heard voices saying things like “It can't be” and “There's just no way”. Yamada-kun is not an exception either, and his eyes are wide open and glued to the image.

「This has gotta be a lie, right?」

Even the cool, calm and collected Endou-san is gazing at the image with her lips trembling.

「This is no lie. Would you like to go and see it yourself?」

Nobody accepted my invitation. Nobody would consider going to such an inhospitable place of course. Well, if I put up a barrier there wouldn't be any problems, but nobody knows that of course.

Everyone is in a daze. This is the point where I give the explanation as to just what kind of situation they have found themselves in. Then, as I informed them where the Empire was located, and about the continued existence of the planet, it appears that their ability to think was suspended.

# Chapter 307: Explosion

The reincarnators gaze in blank amazement at the image. The first one to recover was... Kudou-san.

「Say, if this image is real, then how long is this planet going to hold out for?」

At Kudou-san's words, all the reincarnators are taken aback. Well, normally if you considered a situation like this, it might even sound reasonable to be told that the planet will collapse in a few days, and you'd certainly worry about something that clearly feels like "the end of days".

「Do not worry. For the time being it will not turn into a scenario where it collapses during your lifetimes.」

If my calculations are correct, then if things continue as they are the planet will never collapse. At least, it should last long enough for the reincarnators to live out a whole lifetime. Though I cannot guarantee that for someone like sensei who is a long lived elf. Roughly speaking, since the biggest factor was Potimas's squandering of energy and he has already been removed, the planet should slowly recover from now on.

Indeed, if you just give the planet time, it will recover. However, that will also require a certain sacrifice to be made. That sacrifice is the current nexus of the System – the Goddess Sariel. Sariel is already on the verge of being crushed by the System due to overuse. There's no way that she will be able to endure for such a long time.

In addition, the deterioration of the souls of the people living within this world is about to reach the dangerous zone. The reason why the demons are suffering from a declining birth-rate is because they are no longer able to reincarnate due to the deterioration of the souls. Souls that are forced to reincarnate again and again will suffer from abrasion – they become damaged. If souls are forcibly reincarnated in such a state, then the soul will collapse. If that happens then the soul can never reincarnate again.

Kuro had isolated the people who had shown signs of deteriorated souls in a particular place, but then oni-kun came and smashed the place up.

Besides, using such treatment as a countermeasure cannot solve the fundamental problem anyway. What Kuro had done, was to prevent the people from gaining skills as much as possible, which is that same thing that Potimas was doing to the reincarnators. By doing so, the soul does not have anything extra added to it during their lifetime. Just by adding skills the burden on the soul increases after all. That is not a problem for healthy souls, but for deteriorated souls it can be too much of a burden. However, preventing the acquisition of skills using such a method does not allow the soul to eventually recover. It's something similar to merely stalling the progression of a disease. In order to allow a deteriorated soul to recover, the only way is to stop the soul from reincarnating for a while and to give it some rest.

Then, when the number of souls that are resting increases, the birth rate declines. Net result – the population of the world will steadily decrease. Since the humans have a bigger total population than the demons it hadn't become obvious yet. However, with enough time that will gradually be exposed. If the population decreases then the recovery of the planet will slow, and then with enough time the degradation of the souls will continue. Will the planet recover first, or will the degradation of the souls reach the limit first? The situation will deteriorate into such a game of chicken.

Well, that aspect won't matter to the reincarnators. When the reincarnators reach the end of their current life then they will not enter this world's cycle of reincarnation, but return to the normal cycle of reincarnation. There's no need for them to worry about such a future.

「You implied that's only true for our lifetimes, so does that mean that our children's generation would be at risk then?」

Kudou-san's words were somewhat unexpected. Children? I had unconsciously focused my eyes on Kudou-san's stomach, but when Kudou-san noticed my gaze she rushed to explain.

「I'm not pregnant of course. I'm talking about the future.」

Ahh. I see, I see. Children huh... I hadn't thought about that at all.

Perhaps that was a blind spot on my part, or maybe more of a difference in perception?

From my perspective, to go and have children in this world you'd have to be devoid of reason or something. In the first place, the concept of having children itself had never occurred to me. My babies? Those are, yeah, not so much my children but a special case.

To have children in this world basically means that someone will be reborn after all. That by giving birth from your own stomach, someone will be reborn. Well, that's not something that's limited to this planet though, but on this planet it could be that someone you know is reborn after all. Furthermore, if you're unlucky it's quite possible that someone that you yourself killed could be reborn.

If you knew the truth, then wouldn't you not even consider having children? After all, that's probably the reason why the pope of the Divine World Religion has caused the people to forget about that truth. That they are simply devices that are born to save up energy, continuously reincarnated forever for the sake of atonement. What would people do if they knew that? Suicide? They totally would. However, even if you suicide you'll still be reborn. In that case, how could you possibly break out from purgatory? Just offer yourself up. Offer up your very existence, soul and all.

I would never think about doing such a thing, but for humans who feel trapped and want to disappear it wouldn't be strange. Then, for each person who offers themselves up, the amount of energy recovered is small. The instantaneous amount might be okay, but considering the long term the total amount of energy that can be gained by continuing to reincarnate is far greater. It's not unfortunate that people have forgotten the truth, but that they absolutely had to forget about it.

However, if I speak about that here, what would happen? If they knew that then achieving a happy family would be impossible I guess.

「At least, this planet will not collapse any time soon. In the first place, the attack on Potimas was in order to prevent the collapse. With Potimas



gone, the collapse of the planet will stop, and afterwards it should slowly start to recover.」

I haven't told a lie. It's just that before that happens I intend to do all sorts of things. I didn't address the subject of having children and so on. Addressing that subject would only be a disaster anyway. There are many things in this world where "you are better off not knowing" after all. Well, since the birth rate is declining and all, don't expect to be blessed with children though. Or rather, do you have a partner in the first place?

「"Potimas" is the guy who had us confined, right?」

Kudou-san asks while touching her hand to her forehead. She's not looking at me, but at sensei instead. In sensei's case, she doesn't deny that they were confined, and currently she is in a daze as if her mind had burnt out and gone blank. Maybe it's all been too much and she's become unable to think. But, well, sensei is a strong person, so I'm sure she'll be okay.

I change the displayed image. From the one showing the current status of this planet, to a recording from the recent battle. In this one countless sea urchins and the triangular pyramid are floating in the sky above the forest. There's also the figures of the mechanical soldiers moving through the forest. This is something science fiction-like that doesn't seem fitting in this fantasy-like world.

「Potimas wanted the energy in order to operate these weapons. That energy is the very life force of the planet itself. The reason why the planet is currently in such a condition is because he has been exploiting that energy.」

I'm sure that such images have never been seen in this world before, or even on screens in the previous world. The reincarnators are gazing at them intensely.

「The reason why Potimas gathered the reincarnators, was because he sought the unique powers that the reincarnators have and he planned to use that for something bad.」

In fact he had made plans to put the reincarnators into a mixer for his

goal of perpetual youth and longevity, but I don't want them to hear about something that sounds like it's from a splatter movie so I won't say it. In the first place, what's the point in even talking about "perpetual youth and longevity"? Most people would probably laugh in derision. If I actually said something like "he did all these grandiose things because he was totally and utterly serious about achieving perpetual youth and longevity", I would lose all credibility instead.

「Meaning what? That we were abducted and confined in order to be used?」

「Yes.」

I agreed with Kudou-san's blunt words. It's basically the truth anyway.

「Be, fore, it, be, cause, wha, wha, t?」

Hm? Eh? On turning towards the voice that was making no sense, what I saw was the figure of sensei having collapsed from her chair and convulsing.

# Chapter 308: What was accomplished

「Sensei! Please hang in there, sensei!」

The first to move, was Yamada-kun. He immediately rushed over to where sensei had collapsed from her chair, and then checked her condition. Sensei was shedding tears with her eyes open wide, and while breathing irregularly and raggedly her body was also spasming irregularly. She kept trying to breathe desperately, but since she's suffering despite that maybe the problem is that she's hyperventilating? Sensei had collapsed on the ground and Yamada-kun lifted up the top half of her body in his arms, and then performed Treatment Magic. However, as the Treatment Magic in this world could do nothing more than restore wounded tissue, it could not cure sicknesses. While I don't know whether it's appropriate to call hyperventilating a sickness, I do know that Treatment Magic can't cure it.

「Move.」

As Yamada-kun could do nothing except to try casting Treatment Magic, I pushed him aside and looked into sensei's eyes. Then, I activated my Evil Eyes. I make them perform the opposite to their normal effect. My Evil Eyes have the effect of causing fear in those that see them. Meaning that they affect the mind of the opponent. I've not done it before, but if it's possible to cause fear, then conversely it should be theoretically possible to grant serenity as well.

As I peered into sensei's eyes with my Evil Eyes, her body performed one big spasm. However, after that the large spasms stopped. That being said, her breathing was still disarrayed and the small spasms hadn't abated.

「Sensei, please calm down and take a deep breath.」

So as to not provoke sensei's mind as much as possible, I spoke to her slowly and calmly. Sensei followed my words and breathed in.

「Like that, without rushing, slowly, breathe out please.」

Making it easy to understand, as if instructing someone, yet still calmly, I

carefully formed the words.

「Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out.」

By having her slowly take deep breaths like this, little by little sensei's condition improved. During that time I grasped sensei's hand tightly. Although her breathing has become stable, the tears spilling down her face have not stopped. Also, perhaps because she was crying intensely, the occasional hiccup-like spasms continue. Her face is covered with tears and snot. I mop that up with the sleeve of my clothes. But, as soon as I mop it up they start spilling over again.

For a while, sensei continued to cry. As sensei is an elf her body matures slowly, so compared to the other reincarnators she seems very young in appearance. Simply going by her appearance, it doesn't feel out of place to see her crying so badly like this. However, seeing her like this should be shocking for the reincarnators. Unlike the other reincarnators, sensei was the only adult. Contrary to her appearance, she has been alive for the longest amongst the reincarnators when combining her previous life and this life. For such an adult to show that she has gone to pieces so blatantly, is surely something they could have never imagined. Even I hadn't imagined it.

「It is alright. It is alright now.」

While running my hand over sensei's small back, I gently caressed her.

「You have not made a mistake.」

I gently persuaded her.

「To risk your own life and fight for the sake of your students surely cannot be a mistake.」

I could tell that at my words Kudou-san had averted her face feeling awkward. I might be looking at sensei, but since I habitually use my Fluoroscopy ability to understand everything around me, I could tell that much even though I hadn't focused on her. I could tell that based on her attitude until now that Kudou-san had harboured suspicions about sensei. However, Kudou-san hadn't been aware of just how desperate sensei had

actually been, and just how hard she had struggled to save the students. And also, just how serious she was given how she had collapsed like this when she found out that Potimas had been gathering the reincarnators in order to use them. I had also misjudged her about the latter. I had never even considered that sensei could actually collapse. I had been convinced that sensei of all people could deal with knowing the truth.

「It is certainly the case that Potimas was unscrupulous. But sensei, you had honestly did your best for everyone's sake, right? There is absolutely no mistake in that. Besides, everyone has been able to survive and meet together like this, right?」

I gently spoke to sensei who hadn't stopped sobbing. In practice, while it might be true that sensei was used by Potimas, it is still the case that many students have been saved by sensei. Unlike Earth, this world is a harsh place. I have no idea how many times I almost died, and I'm sure that vampire girl and oni-kun had the same experience. So despite all that, we were simply lucky. It wouldn't have been strange at all for us to have died. The other reincarnators would surely also have faced living each day with death always at their side, unless they had been born to some privileged class like Yamada-kun and the like. If by some chance they hadn't been sheltered by sensei, there might have been only half the number of survivors here instead. And so, it's precisely because she had assembled the reincarnators here in the elf village that it became possible to safely defeat Potimas. It turned out alright in the end, so sensei doesn't have to worry about all that.

「It's... not... everyone!」

Sensei shouts that while crying.

「I... couldn't... save... them! I... couldn't... save... them... all!」

Her way of shouting made me think that this is probably what's called "wailing". While crying, her broken voice never became loud. Yet despite that, why does her voice resound so much?

Certainly, there are some who are not here. Sakurazaki Issei. Kogure Naofumi. Hayashi Kouta. And finally, Natsume Kengo. Apart from

Hasebe-san who is sleeping, those are the reincarnators who are unable to be here. The reincarnators that we can never meet again.

It seems that sensei feels responsible for their deaths. There's nothing that I can say about that though. However, I do think that to take responsibility for that, is basically barking up the wrong tree. Their lives are their own. And so, their deaths are also their own. I don't think that sensei needs to take the blame for their deaths. Perhaps sensei thinks that she could have saved them, but there are things that humans can do and things that they cannot do. To assume that they could all have been saved is an arrogant notion. Unless you are all-knowing and all-powerful, you would never be able to save them all. Even I couldn't have done it.

Afterwards, sensei continued to sob like a child. "Why", "I couldn't save them", "just what for" – sensei murmured such things as if talking in a delirium. In the end, I don't know how much time passed, but sensei finally stopped crying. However, her eyes were somehow hollow and felt lifeless.

「Wakaba-san.」

Kushitani-san spoke to me, after having silently watched over the course of events.

「It seems that sensei is tired, so I'll put her to bed. We shouldn't burden you any further at least. I'll watch her, so continue the discussion.」

That proposal, was something I both wanted to hear and didn't want to hear. Right now, it would be bad to leave sensei alone. I would prefer to watch her myself, but I'm not sure if it would be for the best for me to leave here to nurse sensei. Kudou-san and the others have all sorts of thoughts with regards to sensei I'm sure, so I cannot leave her to someone with such mixed emotions. On that point, since Kushitani-san came to the elf village recently, she should be able to watch over sensei without getting caught up in her emotions. She's also one of the few reincarnators who are able to fight, so there is nobody better to entrust this to than her. Vampire girl is out of the question for a start, and oni-kun is basically a man so I'm sure he be unsuited for nursing sensei.

「Can you take care of her?」

「Leave it to me.」

Kushitani-san carries sensei in her arms. After gazing at Tagawa-kun, Kushitani-san went up the stairs like that. Kushitani-san is dependable, so I'm sure it'll be fine to leave things to her. Even in the worst case that sensei tries to kill herself, Kushitani-san should be able to stop her.

After sensei and Kushitani-san left the scene, the room was filled with an uneasy atmosphere. From having seen sensei's state just now, they surely understand just how serious sensei was about wanting to shelter the reincarnators. Starting with Kudou-san, the reincarnators who had been sheltered, had condemned sensei instead. Having seen sensei become like that, perhaps they have a guilty conscience.



# Chapter 309: Is a bird in a cage happy or not?

After Kushitani-san left carrying sensei, nobody made a move to speak. Everyone wondered what was best, but having no answer they retreated into silence. However, the reactions between them split into several groups. In one group, their gazes wandered around. They gave the impression that they really had no idea what to do and decided to let the matter take care of itself. In another group, their gazes turned on Kudou-san. Even those gazes were split into two kinds – those who seemed to be gazing at Kudou-san as if criticising her, and those who seemed to be gazing at her as the class-rep and having some kind of expectations as to what direction she will pursue next. Needless to say, there were different degrees of enthusiasm shown in those two kinds. Finally, there was the majority group, who were gazing at me. Well, I guess so. It would naturally be my role to continue the discussion. I just wanna leave it all to others though!

Argh, urgh. For now I'll return to my seat and sit down. Perhaps because I did something I'm not used to, or perhaps because I was talking my head off, somehow I feel totally worn out. Can we call it quits here already? We can't? .....Okay.

「.....You sure are kind.」

The one to break the awkward silence, was someone unexpected. Or no, maybe not so unexpected?

「In that case, why.... No, never mind.....」

Yamada-kun, the one to break the silence, showed an expression of mixed feelings and then sunk into silence with an unreadable expression. With that expression showing that all sorts of feelings were jumbled up together, I couldn't read what Yamada-kun had wanted to say. Or maybe I should say that it looks like Yamada-kun himself hadn't sorted out his feelings. Since the time when I had pushed him aside he had simply kept the same stiff posture, and then finally sat down on his chair weakly. It

was like he sat down with a thud, as if he really was sitting down in exhaustion. Ooshima-kun gently patted Yamada-kun on the shoulder out of concern. In response, Yamada-kun gently patted Ooshima-kun's hand in return, perhaps as if to tell her not to worry. Stop flirting, dammit.

「Class-rep, why don't you sit down too?」

Oni-kun spoke out to Kudou-san who had been standing until now. Kudou-san made an expression like a lost child for a moment, and after that she followed his advice and settled down on her seat.

「Well, I'm sure that everyone also has things that they want to say. Since we were living outside the elf village, we only know from rumours about how life was like here anyway, so I can't say that I understand how everyone felt. However, I'm sure that you can tell from sensei's attitude just now that she hadn't shut everyone in here because she wanted to – that she hadn't done this out of malice but out of good intentions. I hope that you can at least bear in mind that she was desperately trying to do this.」

Oni-kun made a calm speech. There were various reactions – those who listened seriously and those who somehow seemed to accept it uncomfortably.

「But, you know, that still doesn't get rid of the fact that we were shut in here, right?」

Indeed, the one who brazenly responded to oni-kun like that, was Shinohara-san. In response to those words, Kudou-san made a startled expression. Back in their previous lives, the diligent Kudou-san and the uninhibited Shinohara-san got along badly. It seems that hasn't changed now either.

「Yeah but, you know, if things had continued as they were then that Po... Po... Polimas or something guy was about to use us for something, right? From the way you guys are talking about it, it sounds like it was for something nasty. So doesn't that mean that sensei was unknowingly an accomplice in all that? Are you saying we should forgive her because she didn't know?」

Oi? What the hell are you saying? .....Shall I kill her?

「That's true.」

「We're in a fantasy world and all, yet we were kept caged like animals.」

「Even if you call it protection, it was still confinement.」

There were voices whispering support for Shinohara-san.

「But, we were guaranteed all of life's necessities, so it wasn't that bad, right?」

「It wasn't quite what you would call the slow life, but I wasn't really dissatisfied I guess.」

「I can't really criticise her after she looked like that you know.」

On the other hand, voices in support of sensei could also be heard. The ratio was about half and half. However, the way both of them were saying it, it was a discussion like they both understood that either option wasn't that good. They certainly had no small amount of dissatisfaction in their lives here. Despite that, they couldn't go all-out to criticise sensei either. That's what it felt like.

If I had to say it, then the boys are showing more dissatisfaction. I guess boys do yearn for adventures and stuff after all huh? They're sending envious looks at Tagawa-kun who worked as an adventurer outside at least. Or perhaps it's precisely because there is a successful example in Tagawa-kun here that they think so. It gives a feeling of "If only I could get outside, then I could do that as well". Would it really go that well...?

「I better warn you, but it's not easy living outside, okay?」

Oops, Tagawa-kun already spoke up.

「Hey dude, it's totally unconvincing when you say it.」

One of the boys tossed out that retort. Certainly. When a successful guy like Tagawa-kun says that, it only sounds like he's boasting.

「Okay then, let me ask you this – have you ever spent an entire day groaning in pain? Or maybe something lesser like getting a bone fracture

or a really big wound?」

In response to Tagawa-kun's words, the boys amongst the reincarnators exchanged glances.

「There was this one time when I made a mistake during work and fractured a bone.」

「Okay, try imagining this then – that is a daily occurrence.」

In response to the boy who had come forward, Tagawa-kun nonchalantly said that.

「Huh?」

「If you wanna be an adventurer, then injuries like that are a daily occurrence. Even if it's cured by magic you'll soon get a similar injury. Unless you can get used to being constantly bruised and wounded, you won't be able to go on. By the way, if Asaka hadn't been there for me my heart would probably have broken ages ago.」

Is he talking seriously, or is speaking fondly? I'm hesitant to decide which.

「Since I had something that I wanted to do no matter what, I started down the dangerous path known as the adventurer. However, I often regretted that. There were many times when I felt that I was about to die, and if Asaka hadn't been there I don't know how many times I would have died in practice. If you want to be an adventurer just because you yearn for it, then I'm telling you this for your own good – give it up.」

Tagawa-kun says that while surveying the boys. Hmm-mm. So which is it – is he talking serious or speaking fondly?

「I've been talking about the peculiar occupation known as the adventurer until now, but even apart from that it is dangerous outside. Due to the nature of my adventurer job, I've been to many places and seen many tragedies. People killed by monsters, people killed by bandits and so on. That doesn't just affect the people who died either. There's also children who lost all their relatives, and children who were abandoned for financial reasons. Class-rep, your family was poor, right? If you hadn't

come here, I wonder what would have happened to you?」

Tagawa-kun said something cruel to Kudou-san. She hung her head without being able to refute him. After all, Kudou-san had been sold by her own parents. Since she knows she was sold to the elves, it's highly conceivable that she could have been sold to someone else. In that case I'm sure she wouldn't have been sold as a baby, though perhaps once she had grown a bit older it would be possible, and where she'd end up sold to would be a matter of luck. It would have been fine if she had been sold to some prestigious merchant based on her intelligence as a reincarnator. However, considering the good looks that the reincarnators have, it's highly likely that she could have been sold to an indecent place.

「But Tagawa can only say that because he's experienced living outside, right? We never even had that choice.」

In response Shinohara-san's words, the reincarnators again started getting noisy. Oni-kun clapped his hands to quieten those reincarnators.

「At the end of the day, I think it's meaningless to talk about which would have been better. After all, the past cannot be changed. There is no way to change the fact that we are alive here right now. And that also goes for those who aren't here – the people who have died. I think it's better to think that it's because you are alive that you have the luxury to talk about which would have been better.」

Simply being alive is a luxury. Having heard that, the reincarnators fell completely silent.

「You, who killed Yuugo, or rather Natsume, are saying that?」

Except for one person.

Author's note: Please think of Shinohara-san in the web novel as being a different person to the one in the published edition.

# Chapter 310: Crime and Punishment, Life and Death

Due to Yamada-kun's statement, the fact that oni-kun had killed Natsume-kun had become clear. Since Natsume-kun wasn't amongst the reincarnators gathered at this treehouse, I think it's likely that some people had guessed why. Even so, even if they had been able to guess that Natsume-kun had died, I really doubt that any of them could have imagined that it was one of their ex-classmates who had killed him. The proof of that, is in the chilly silence that dominated the room.

The only exceptions were Tagawa-kun and the tied up Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun. Also, the ones who knew it beforehand, or rather saw it in front of their eyes – Ooshima-kun and Yamada-kun. Since even Kudou-san had lost the ability to speak, naturally the others had looks on their faces showing that they either couldn't properly digest Yamada-kun's words or that they were befuddled. Even for those who understood, perhaps they doubted whether it was actually true or something, as they were glancing around restlessly at the others.

Most likely, for the reincarnators who had been living inside the elf village, death was probably a distant concept. For that reason, even when they were told that an acquaintance had died it didn't feel real to them. Even more so that it was one of their ex-classmates who had done the deed. In Japan it was rare for people to die of anything except old age, and maybe that expectation had been carried over. In which case their sense of death would completely run counter to this world, where people die all the time whether they're an acquaintance or not.

On that point, Tagawa-kun and Kusama-kun who were raised outside the elf village have a proper sense of life and death in this world. Which is why they're not flustered. However, in comparison to that, why is Yamada-kun so indignant when he was also raised outside?

In the first place, Yamada-kun should have held a considerable resentment against Natsume-kun. After all, his father's death and being

chased out of his birthplace is because of Natsume-kun. Furthermore, Natsume-kun even did something so cruel as to brainwash Yamada-kun's sister and friend, and set them on him. Eh? There was someone who allowed that to happen? Who might that be eh? Well, putting that aside. Even if Yamada-kun has had any thoughts of killing Natsume-kun, isn't it too strange that he would actually want to let the guy survive? I don't get it.

「Say, is what he said, true?」

The one who broke the silence, was Kudou-san. Oni-kun and Yamada-kun keep glaring at each other and don't move. When those two glanced to the side, Kudou-san turned around towards me again to repeat her question. But ehh, you're picking me!?

「If what he said was true, then does that mean that after you lot used Natsume-kun you then killed him?」

Hm, well, that's mostly correct.

「I will not deny it.」

「I'll take that as confirmation.」

In response to my answer, Kudou-san said that with a severe expression. Well, it's not actually wrong after all. In practice, what I did is probably even more unscrupulous than what Kudou-san is imagining though. But I'll refrain from saying that. I'm sure we'll both be happier that way, yep.

「I'll say this first – him being killed is simply something that would inevitably happen. Therefore, there's no problem even if I killed him.」

「There surely is a problem!」

Interceding between oni-kun and Kudou-san, Yamada-kun jumped in with a shout. It surprised me a bit that he did something out of character and he had jumped up so quickly that he knocked over his chair.

「Shun. Since you are actually the primary victim, don't you think it's strange that you are sticking up for him instead?」

「Well, that might be true. It's not like I have forgiven Natsume-kun, and

I don't have any intention of sticking up for him either.」

Oh? I guess Yamada-kun wouldn't be able to forgive Natsume-kun after all huh. Well indeed, if he could forgive all that, he'd have to be some kind of incredible saint. Or rather, going that far would actually be too strange huh.

「However, despite that, isn't it strange that you're basically saying "yeah I killed him and it's over"?」

In response to Yamada-kun's words, some of the reincarnators showed signs of approval. Well..... I guess so. Since they were raised in the enclosed environment of the elf village, it's not so strange for them to have kept their sense of values from Japan. Criminals in Japan are impartially punished according to the law. The death penalty is only applied in the case of genuinely extreme crimes. There's even a movement for abolishing the death penalty. The value of a person's life is different compared to this world. That even applies to criminals.

「It was necessary for Natsume to live and atone for his crimes. He had the duty to do so. It was wrong to kill him and stop that. Once someone's dead, then it's all over, right?」

Hmm. He is certainly making a decent argument, but also, I can't help but think that he sure is naive. After all, there's tons of criminals in this world who don't show the least inclination of atoning for their crimes. Taking his words at face value that no matter what kind of criminal they are they would eventually repent, is the kind of thing that only exists in expedient stories. If someone refuses to reform themselves no matter how much you try, then you're just wasting your time with them. In such cases, I think it's much neater to nip the problem in the bud and kill them off quickly you know. Well, since I don't know what would have happened in Natsume-kun's case, this is simply just my own opinion though.

「That's true. Once someone's dead then it's all over. Killing is bad. That much is natural. It's not something forgivable.」

Oni-kun approved of Yamada-kun's words.

「In that case...」



「Then, isn't it also natural that Natsume cannot be forgiven as he has taken many lives?」

Whatever Yamada-kun was about to say, oni-kun interrupted him. Carried within oni-kun's words was a force strong enough to silence Yamada-kun.

「Listen Shun. People who have had someone close to them killed are not going to forgive the killer. No matter how much that person tries to atone for their crime, the hatred in their hearts will not vanish. It might fade. But, it will not vanish.」

Those words had a strong sense of it being something that he had experienced personally. On hearing such heavy words, it could be understood that someone close to oni-kun had been killed.

「Shun, I think what you are saying is praiseworthy. However, no matter how he struggled he was not in a situation where he could be forgiven. He had to die. That's why I gave him a mercy killing. Can't you agree with that?」

There's no way that Yamada-kun would be able to refute oni-kun's compelling argument.

「I can't agree, indeed.」

Or so I had thought. However, something powerful shined in Yamada-kun's eyes. Something unyielding was definitely there.

「Shun. Surely you can understand from seeing this world? This world is not like Japan. Life is cheap here. Even if you still carry your sense of values from Japan, can't you see that it's inevitable?」

Oni-kun asked the obstinate Yamada-kun that, trying to persuade him.

「It's inevitable? Why do you think so?」

However, that gave rise to an unexpected counterattack.

「Certainly, life is cheap in this world. People die for minor reasons. It's precisely for that reason that Julius-onii-sama also... no, never mind that now. Anyway, despite all that! Just because of that, that doesn't make it

okay to take those lives away so easily, right!?!」

A shout. A shout with the power to overturn my perception from just earlier that he was naive. I had thought that he was naively sticking to his sense of values from Japan still. That was wrong. His shout indicates that Yamada-kun is still persisting with those naive thoughts, despite understanding all that.

「This world is not like Japan? Sure it's not. Nothing in this world is like Japan. But, does that mean we gotta toss away our sense of values from Japan? That it's hopeless?」

At Yamada-kun's words, Ooshima-kun's shoulders started trembling. Does that reaction indicate that Ooshima-kun had also thrown away her sense of values from Japan due to her life in this world?

「Kyouya. Let me ask you this instead. You said that it was inevitable. Aren't you simply giving in and saying that it's inevitable because that's how this world is?」

# Chapter 311: The Limits of Patience (Toilet)

「Sorry. I know you're having a serious conversation and all, but...」

Ripping apart the tense atmosphere was Kusama-kun, who we'd completely forgotten about. Kusama-kun, who was still tied up while facing Ogiwara-kun, had spoken up with a rather stiff expression that couldn't be expressed in a still drawing.

「...I'm almost about to leak here. Do you mind if I go to the toilet?」

This led to a fascinating change of expressions in Ogiwara-kun, who was tied up together with him. He went from showing an appalled face expressing “You damn idiot who can't read the mood” to a shocked face expressing “Are you serious!?”. Yeah, well. They are tied up together after all. So if Kusama-kun leaks, then it would indeed be bad for Ogiwara-kun who to stuck to him wouldn't it. Naturally, you'd make such an expression.

「It should be fine I guess? It seems that some people need to calm down a bit anyway. So let's take a little break.」

Before I could say anything, vampire girl went and declared a break. Not only that, the moment she gave that declaration she stood up from her chair in a rush and stomped outside. She'd had a bored expression that she didn't even try to conceal since earlier, but she must have been really bored I guess...

「Okay then, toilet break!」

Kusama-kun vanishes while shouting that line. As if he had never been tied up, he vanishes in an instant. Ooh! That was rather ninja-like for once. So he could have instantly escaped at any time if he'd felt like it. I guess you could say that he more or less read the mood by not doing that without getting permission first? Was the reason why he declared an intention to go to the toilet also for the sake of changing the mood then? ... Nah, no way. Of all people Kusama-kun wouldn't do that. Most likely he

simply couldn't find the right timing to ask to go to the toilet. There are people like that aren't there – those who need to go to the toilet for some reason at a critical moment. Like during an exam.

Due to vampire girl and Kusama-kun suddenly leaving, the other reincarnators seem a bit lost as to what to do. However, as if responding to oni-kun mutely sitting with his eyes closed, when Yamada-kun picked up the chair that had been kicked over earlier and calmly sat down, they began to move. They soon started doing whatever they felt like. Some people started to talk with others next to them and some people went upstairs, and so on.

Ah! Talking of upstairs, sensei should be being looked after right now! I'll go take a look at how she's doing.

Is it fine for me to leave since I'm the one facilitating this discussion though? With everything that's been going I feel worn out anyway, so even if I'm not around it'll work out somehow. Putting it another way though, it doesn't feel like it'll make any difference whether or not I'm here.

I stand up from my chair, and walk over towards the staircase. Somehow, I get the feeling that everyone left here really paid attention to me, but let's just say that it was probably just my imagination. In particular, I feel that there were intense gazes stabbing at me from around Kudou-san and Shinohara-san, but I'll just ignore that!

「If you're going to where sensei is, then is it okay if I come along with you?」

While I'm feeling like I'm forcing my way through a bed of needles with my iron will, there's one hero who fails to read the mood and calls out to me. Yeah, well, you are in fact the Hero in practice, Yamada-kun. Or rather, that's not something you need to ask permission for anyway, and despite phrasing that as a question you're totally brimming with the intent to get up from your chair you know.

Everything's gotten so bothersome, so I silently make a nod signifying permission, and just ignore Yamada-kun otherwise while leaving. Yamada-kun follows me in silence as well. Behind him, Ooshima-kun

follows with the sense of not really having anything else to do. There's all these gazes following on behind us, but you lose if you worry about such things!

After silently climbing up the stairs, we arrive at the intended room. Just in case I'll knock on the door out of politeness and wait for a reply. But, instead of a reply the door is opened from the inside. The one who opened the door is Kushitani-san who was attending to sensei.

「Come in. She's still sleeping, so please be quiet.」

As might be expected from a former adventurer – it seems that she had sensed our approach. I've thought this since the start of the discussion, but Kushitani-san and Tagawa-kun are better at understanding the situation since they know both about the outside world and living inside this elf village. Perhaps because they have the experience of being self-sufficient as adventurers, their ability to make decisions feels different to the other reincarnators. There's the example just earlier where she took the initiative to take care of sensei for a start. Regarding that, while Yamada-kun and the others had also lived outside, the key difference is that they had a sheltered upbringing.

At Kushitani-san's prompting we enter the room, and can now see sensei who is laid out on a bed. She should have been conscious when Kushitani-san had taken her out earlier, but perhaps out of anxiety or something it seems that she's been put to bed. Also, apart from the bed that sensei is sleeping in, this room has another bed, and there Hasebe-san is sleeping. Felmina-chan, who is monitoring Hasebe-san, is sitting silently beside that bed. Somehow... I feel that Felmina-chan's gaze is really cold. It's surely my imagination! Today I've felt all sorts of gazes on me, but I'm sure they're all just my imagination! I gotta handle such things this way though! Okay!?

「How is sensei's condition?」

Yamada-kun asks Kushitani-san that question.

「I can't really tell. Rather than a problem with her body it's a problem with her mind after all. She's currently asleep due to fatigue, but I don't

know what will happen when she wakes up.]

Saying so, Kushitani-san closes the door. With her frank manner of speaking, that might come across as being somewhat heartless, but I'm sure she's worried about sensei in her own way.

「How are things on your end?」

Rather than asking Yamada-kun, Kushitani-san asks that while looking at me. It seems that she's asking how things went downstairs, since if the discussion has finished then it's rather early for us to be showing up here.

「We're taking a short break. I had rather derailed the conversation.」

Yamada-kun replies with a wry smile. So he was self-conscious about having derailed things huh.

「Well, it can't be helped. There's too many things that people want to ask, so the situation is one where you don't even know from what point to start asking about.」

Kushitani-san glances at me while sighing. For Kushitani-san herself, it seems that she has concerns about what we'll be doing from now on as well. Even if she is a former adventurer with much experience, being unable to envision how things will turn out is worrying, I guess.

「There's just one thing I'd like to know. Wakaba-san, what do you plan to do with us from now on?」

Kushitani-san had gathered her resolve in order to ask that. Hmm. I can understand that it would take a lot of courage to ask such a thing, but in comparison my reply is going to be rather curt you know.

「Not much. There's nothing in particular.」

「Huh?」

I guess even Kushitani-san wasn't able to make sense of my reply, since she gave out a strange voice.

「“Nothing in particular”...」

Kushitani-san seems like she's about to start clutching her head in

bewilderment, but, yeah, well, anyway. It's basically true though. The main reason why we wiped out the elf village was to kill off Potimas. After that, it was to free sensei who was being used, and after that it was to rescue the reincarnators who had been confined. To put it bluntly, rescuing the reincarnators was simply something incidental to killing off Potimas. Therefore, to be honest, I hadn't really thought about what to do with the reincarnators. Whatever they want to do from now on, I think it's fine for them to be free to do it. That being said, suddenly tossing them out and simply telling them they're free to do whatever they like is a bit much, so I do plan to give them a minimum amount of support though. Well, they're all plenty old enough when including their previous lives, so if I just prepare the basics for them I believe they should be able to support themselves. However, perhaps due to them being walled off in a little garden, it seems that mentally they haven't grown that much, so it's not like I have no concerns though.

It would be fine to explain all that, but it's a pain. This damn mouth of mine! I wanna sue it for being hopeless at talking! That being the case, it's best to simply offload everything onto somebody else at times like these.

「Felmina.」

「Yessir!」

And there's an excellent sacrificial lamb available here.

「Take care of the rest.」

「.....Yessir.」

There was quite a pause before her reply, but Felmina-chan can be depended upon to take care of the rest. I've seen how sensei is, and since this is a place for sleeping there's no point in making it any noiser. Therefore I'll be able to take a proper break now. This is definitely not a case of deserting under enemy fire. I'm not, okay! So anyway, I'll head back.

Leaving the dumbfounded Kushitani-san and Yamada-kun and co, I turn around and leave the room.

# Chapter 312: The Limits of Patience (Boredom)

On returning to the ground floor, it was quite distinct how the previously relaxed mood became strained again. The moment I returned, almost everyone there stabbed their gazes at me. Ahh. So my mere existence makes everyone else stressed out then huh, I see.

Kusama-kun hasn't returned yet for a start, and there's various other people who haven't returned yet, so I guess this short break will continue for a bit longer then huh. Or rather, those gazes are like a storm so I'll leave! For some reason Ogiwara-kun is sitting on the floor in a seiza, but I'll pretend I never saw it.

I ignore the gazes stabbing at me, and continue walking so that I will simply leave outside. When it could be seen that I was about to walk past them, Shinohara-san started to stand up but she was stopped by the two girls sitting either side of her. I pretend not to notice that exchange, and continue walking through the doorway and go outside.

Sheesh. What's with this sense of walking on a bed of nails. It makes me uneasy. Would it be okay for me to just ditch them? No good? Okay then...

Once this short break is over the explanation meeting will have to resume, but my excellent supporter in oni-kun is in a strange mood though. Maybe I can't hope for support from oni-kun any more. If that's the case, then I'll need support from somebody else, but there's only one candidate for that though.

Talking of that candidate, ie vampire girl, she's summoned a black wolf and leaning against it while sitting down, endeavoring to bask in the sun. Oi, vampire. Are you okay with that? Is that okay with you, vampire? Somehow it appears that vampire girl has come up with a spectacle that seems to be picking a fight with all the vampires in existence. It would be a heartwarming spectacle if she wasn't a vampire, but she is actually a vampire.



「What?」

Don't you go "What?" at me! Apologise to the vampires who have failed to overcome direct sunlight!

「The weather's lovely. If it wasn't for the smell it would feel so nice that I could just sleep like this.」

Apologise! Apologise to all vampires everywhere! Sure, the weather is actually lovely. The sun's rays are beating down on us. The black wolf that vampire girl is leaning against seems like it would make a nice fluffy cushion too. If something could be done about the smell drifting in from the burnt fields, certainly the weather would be so nice that you could just fall asleep. And while I'm thinking that, vampire girl really has closed her eyes and has a posture where it seems like she's fucking sleeping.

「Oww!?!」

Somehow I feel pissed off, so I lightly kick vampire girl in the side. Vampire girl glares at me with an angry expression, but that was a case of "force majeure" so it couldn't be helped! It's all vampire girl's fault!

「What with you? Is it wrong to be sleeping?」

It's wrong!

「It's fine isn't it. There's no point in me being at such a gathering anyway. If there's no need for me to be there then why can't I just be absent?」

Certainly she might as well have been air earlier, but since it's now looking like oni-kun has dropped out of being a supporter, carrying on like that is troubling for me. I need to impose the exposition role onto her somehow! Can she... actually explain things though? Wouldn't that be rather worrying in various way?

「It was so boring I was about to fall asleep anyway. I couldn't help it.」

Saying so vampire girl gives out a lovely yawn. Even when languid her bearing is excessively sexy. Dammit. Should I pluck off her outrageous breasts? Ah, no, never mind. An image forms in my mind of the Demon

King gleefully reaching out her hands with a wicked smile, so I put aside any thoughts about breasts in a panic.

「In the first place, do you have any obligation to explain things to that lot, goshujin-sama? That Hero was prattling on about having the right to ask, but it's not like he actually has such a right though? After all, we were just being considerate enough to give them an explanation. It's not like we have any obligation to explain things to them at all, so we could just leave them alone.」

Wow vampire girl, it sure seems that you were storing up more stress than I had thought during that explanation meeting.

Well, it's not like I don't understand vampire girl's feelings. Vampire girl has completely drawn a line under her previous life. She makes a clear distinction that her previous life is her previous life and her current life is her current life, so I think she regards the reincarnators as being like acquaintances from the past that she's had some brief exchanges with. Or perhaps even less than acquaintances. Either way, that's why she doesn't think we have any obligation to be nice to them.

To be honest, that perception is not wrong. Our obligation to explain things to the reincarnators, is basically zero. However, they are in fact the victims here, so abandoning them while they have no clue as to what's going on feels a bit too much, so basically, that's the only reason to explain things to them. We have no obligation or duty at all. As vampire girl has said, the point Yamada-kun was making about having the right to ask, is also something we are only doing out of consideration after all.

「Or rather, why were you giving them such a thorough explanation, goshujin-sama? That's more of a miracle to me. Since you're so poor at explaining things.」

Hey, what's with that last sentence! You know, that might in fact be the truth but there are certain things that you just mustn't talk about, okay!

「This is the cold-blooded and inhuman goshujin-sama who has no trace of compassion after all.」

And she adds another such sentence. Vampire girl, my dear, shall we

have a little TALK perhaps? It seems that we are having some communication difficulties here.

「Sigh. Fine then. I'll take on the exposition role for you.」

Just when I was about to kidnap vampire girl to My Home to have a little DISCUSSION with her, she tossed out that proposal. What... the... heck!? Vampire girl, you could actually read the mood!?

「What's with that surprised expression? Just what do you think of me, goshujin-sama?」

Piece of junk vampire. Perhaps my inner thoughts were transmitted, as vampire girl stands up with an annoyed expression on her face. The black wolf that vampire girl was leaning against disappears into vampire girl's shadow as if being sucked in.

「Humph. I bet if everything was left to goshujin-sama this farce would just be dragged out. It seems like Kyouya-kun is being weighed down by various things as well and can't smarten up either. It would be best to get this boring thing over with already.」

Saying so, vampire girl jauntily returns to the tree house where the reincarnators are. Who are you? Who is this person giving off the aura of being a capable woman?

「What are you doing? Let's get started already so that we can get it over with already.」

Before she reaches the door vampire girl turns to look behind, calling out to me. Feeling like half my soul has come out, I follow after with unsteady feet.

# Chapter 313: The princess does things her way

On returning to the interior of the tree house, there was the sight of Kusama-kun and Ogiwara-kun tied up. With the way they've been bound, their situation is one of being constantly forced to face each other as if embracing. I had thought it was just Ogiwara-kun who was sitting in a seiza when I left earlier, but why has he been tied up with Kusama-kun again? .....Yeah. Let's just ignore this. Walking ahead of me, vampire girl ignores this as well anyway.

Vampire girl returns to the seats where we had been sitting earlier. However, she stands there with her arms folded rather than sitting. However, she seems to silently urge me to sit, so I'll take a seat for now.

「Okay then. We shall be resuming now. Is there anyone missing? There is? If there is then would someone please go call them.」

While vampire girl claps her hands, she raises her voice so that everyone in the room can hear her. While she is speaking in a relatively loud voice, it's mysterious and amazing how she manages to keep an unimpaired air of refinement about her. Huh? When did she become so imposing again?

In response to vampire girl's voice, the reincarnators who had been chatting until then become quiet. At the same time, Kudou-san gets up from her chair and leaves to go up the stairs. Yamada-kun and others haven't returned yet, so it seems she's gone to call them. On ascertaining that, vampire girl once again takes a stance of standing with her arms folded.

Oni-kun looks on at that with a quizzical expression. Yep. I fully understand oni-kun's feelings. In situations like this vampire girl has never been at the forefront after all. Also, when vampire girl takes the initiative to do something, it's normally a sign that something worthless is about to occur anyway. Oni-kun glances at me as if trying to ask me something. However, I have nothing to say!

After waiting for a while, Kudou-san returns with Yamada-kun and the rest. They each take their respective seats.

「Then we shall resume.」

Perhaps because vampire girl has taken on the role of facilitating the discussion, a different sort of tension fills the air. Compared to the air of tension previously, where there was a deep sense of worry about being unable to tell what would happen next and a dread about all these unknown people being around, the current tension seems to be purely because of the overpowering presence of vampire girl. Huh...? It somehow seems that the air of tension towards me is worse? Incomprehensible.

「I shall start off by telling you this – your situation is one of where you have been saved by us and you must understand that we have the power of life and death over you firmly in our grasp.」

Wha!? She somehow started by tossing out a bomb.

「Wait a moment!」

「Silence. Do not interrupt.」

Yamada-kun stood up as if to protest, but vampire girl silenced him. Physically.

「Gah!?!」

I think it's most likely that the only ones in this place who could understand what had just happened, are oni-kun and I. Even with Ooshima-kun and Tagawa-kun who are amongst the reincarnators who can fight to a certain extent, it probably wasn't possible for them to follow vampire girl's movements. As to what vampire girl actually did, she simply closed up to Yamada-kun and knocked his legs out from under him. However, it was simply the case that the speed at which she knocked his legs out required a degree of strength that was in no way normal.

Yamada-kun collapsed while knocking back his chair. I guess she held back somewhat, as Yamada-kun's legs don't appear to be broken. If she hadn't held back, rather than his legs being broken, it's more likely that the lower half of his body would have been blown away.

「We are providing you with this information out of kindness, or rather, out of a sense of courtesy. Do you understand? We, are, providing, you.」

Facing the collapsed Yamada-kun who is groaning in pain, vampire girl speaks to him as if addressing a little child.

「To put it bluntly, saving you was simply incidental to us while we destroyed the elf village. We could simply abandon you without giving any explanation at all. However, out of kindness for our relationship from our previous lives, we decided to grant you an explanation. That's awfully kind of us, don't you think?」

I don't think a kind person would suddenly knock someone off their feet though. Or rather, such a person wouldn't make statements that could be taken as a threat, such as having the right of life and death in their grasp.

「Hey.」

「You keep silent as well, Kyouya-kun. It's your fault that this got derailed, so could you refrain from throwing the situation into further disorder?」

Taking the frank advice offered, oni-kun is silenced by vampire girl. That's not something that should be said by the one who messed this place up right now though!

「You think you have the right to know? There's no way that's the case. You are currently in a situation where you are like prisoners of war. On top of that, you are refugees without a native country. So whether we let you live or die basically depends upon our mood. Is that understood?」

In contrast with the sweetly smiling vampire girl, the expressions on the faces of the reincarnators suddenly worsens. Previously the atmosphere had been like an extension of a class meeting, but with disturbing words like kill or live being tossed around, it seems that they've noticed that the situation they're currently in is more dangerous than they had previously thought. Yep. Though the method used to make them understand was overly forceful though! What's going to happen in this frozen atmosphere!

「That way of speaking...」

「Be silent already.」

Yamada-kun was about to say something again, but his face is ruthlessly kicked by vampire girl.

「Stop that!」

「Quit interrupting already.」

When Ooshima-kun moves to stop her, vampire girl slaps her in the face, knocking her down to the floor. What are you doing to a girl's face!? As to whether Ooshima-kun belongs in the “girl” category or not, well, whatever.

「If you have any complaints then please leave. We have no responsibility to give you an explanation after all. If you say that you don't want to listen then you can simply not listen. If you want to listen then be silent. It is a waste of time for you to talk.」

The room becomes as silent as the grave. Yamada-kun silently goes to Ooshima-kun's side, and apart from applying Treatment Magic to the damaged parts, he doesn't make any movements. It feels like even the breathing is quiet.

「Very good. Then listen in silence. I will not accept any questions along the way. Once you have heard everything, I will accept questions at the end. Until then, listen in silence. Okay?」

Nobody attempts to make any objection to vampire girl. These methods are completely from a reign of terror! Certainly this might be effective for explaining the situation, but aren't the impressions afterwards are going to be so bad that it'll be painful? How is this going to turn out? Actually, I don't care anymore.

# Chapter 314: Bomb-dropping

「How far into the explanation had I gotten to? Ermm.」

Vampire girl puts a finger to her chin, and began to ponder away like that. Yep. Actually, I hadn't been listening to a thing she had been saying recently! With the sense of ignoring a long speech by a school principal, it was all going in one ear and out the other for sure.

「Well, it's fine.」

It ain't fine!

「Regarding the current situation of the world, let's skip over it. To be blunt, if I spoke about stuff like the world being close to collapse it would just be a bother for you, right? After all, even if you heard about it it's not like you'd actually be able to do anything. It'd just be a waste of time to hear about it. If you really want to know the details then ask later individually.」

Oi, that's damn blunt. Well, what she's saying is basically correct though. The majority of the reincarnators are ordinary people without any combat ability for a start. Even if that bunch of normies were told to stop the collapse of the world, they wouldn't be able to do anything. Unlike a group of commoners in a certain movie, they're not able to do something like fly out into space to drill holes in a giant meteorite that was about to come crashing down.

「First of all, this planet will not collapse during your lifetimes. So it's a waste of time to worry about it. Rather than worry about something that'll happen after you die, surely you should be worrying about what will happen to you next?」

Vampire girl gazes over the reincarnators. Since she had remorselessly knocked down Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun just earlier, there's nobody who replies to vampire girl who seems to be looking for confirmation. However, several reincarnators respond to her attitude and nodded to confirm vampire girl's words. They're looking at vampire girl and nodding with serious expressions.



「As was said earlier, this elf village has fallen into our hands. So please think of your treatment as being like that of prisoners of war. However, it's not like you're actually enemy soldiers or something so you won't be treated roughly. So long as you have good listening comprehension at least.」

I don't think it was just my imagination that several reincarnators gulped audibly. Figures, huh? While she said that they won't be treated roughly, she had just earlier knocked down Yamada-kun and Ooshima-kun. So as soon as the words had left her mouth they weren't credible. I think it's inevitable that her words would be interpreted as saying that unless you're submissive you'll be knocked down arbitrarily. Or rather, perhaps that's her intention? Hmmm. I dunno if vampire girl is thinking about it that deeply or not though. I get the feeling that she's simply saying whatever comes to mind without thinking about it. This is vampire girl we're talking about after all.

「So, with regards to your immediate future, for the time being we intend to do what we can to accommodate your requests. If you seek asylum then we'll take care of you, if you want to leave then just go ahead and do it. If you wish to remain here then feel free to do so. Well, we have killed all the elves for a start, and the barrier is gone as well, so I can't really recommend staying here though.」

Yes, bombs away! A murmur rises up around the room. Probably, if not for vampire girl's warning beforehand not to make a fuss, there'd be angry roars flying about now I guess? Or rather, vampire girl's deterrent is effective enough that I'm actually impressed.

The common reaction of the reincarnators on hearing the fact that the elves had been annihilated was... confusion. Well, if you'd just heard that the people you had been living with and interacting with until yesterday had suddenly all been killed then I guess you would be confused as well. Based on what we had been saying since earlier, I'm sure they understood that the elves had fought with us and lost. However, I'm sure they hadn't imagined that meant that the elves had been annihilated. At any rate, the majority of the reincarnators have no experience of war and combat, and

have been living here like an extension of being in peaceful Japan. In return, the shock is all the larger. Amongst the reincarnators, some went pale, and some tried to laugh it off but failed.

「Hey.」

Perhaps he couldn't bear to see the state of chaos, as oni-kun pulled on vampire girl's arm.

「What is it?」

「Now's not the time to talk about this, surely?」

「If not now then when? If you mean to conceal it then they'll still find out about it sooner or later, so isn't it better to tell them sooner?」

Vampire girl tears away her arm from oni-kun's grip. He pulls his arm back without being able to offer a rebuttal. Uh huh. Certainly, while the reincarnators might be all confused now, it is still something that they would need to be told in due course. While this might be a big shock to all the reincarnators, it's also not a good idea for us to spend forever dithering over it and keep saying nothing either. As vampire girl said, saying it right now from the start might be for the best.

「So it's true, then.....」

Due to the exchange between vampire girl and oni-kun, it seems that they understand that vampire girl's previous statement was not a lie or anything of the sort. Leading to what Yamada-kun had muttered in a soft voice.

「That's right. Oh, and don't speak any further okay? I have no desire to listen to your opinion after all. Even if you have something you want to say I have no intention of listening. If you want me to listen even still then go ahead and use force to silence me and make me listen. I bet you can't though.」

Scathing! Merciless! This is just cruel! Yamada-kun is gritting his teeth and seems to be about to cry you know! I think you could have used a slightly more indirect expression for that.

「Don't whine on and on about something that's over already. You'd be nothing more than a sissy. If you have a problem then you should have simply stopped it. I wish you wouldn't turn a blind eye to your pathetic inability to achieve things yourself and then make a racket later.」

Scathing! Merciless! This is just cruel! Far from using an indirect expression she's gone with the style of wanting to rub salt into his wounds! Yamada-kun is clenching his fist and trembling you know! How pitiful.

「At any rate, no matter the process the elves have been destroyed. That's all you need to know. Also, what you should be concerned about is only what kind of livelihood you want afterwards. As for what occurred here with one thing or another, or responsibilities, or what about justice or the like, I just don't give a damn about that. Go ahead and discuss that between yourselves.」

After dismissing him as nonsense, vampire girl turns away from Yamada-kun. As if to say that he's not even worth looking at.

「There will no longer be any aid given in this village. On top of that, since the barrier protecting this village is also gone, monsters will be able to enter as much as they want. With this place becoming a wasteland, if there is someone who's attachment to this place is laudable enough that they want to stay anyway, then I will respect that wish. Do you want to stay?」

At vampire girl's words, several of the reincarnators shook their heads from side to side. Well, that's fair enough.

「If you mean that you don't want to stay then we shall properly escort you outside of the village, or rather outside of the forest. After that we'll then listen to your individual requests okay, as I had said earlier. We will try to accommodate your requests as much as possible. Of course, that's only within the range of what we are able to provide.」

Indeed. I think we can more or less guarantee a minimum livelihood. I'll knock them down if they ask to be able to idle away in a stately mansion though. I think we'll be able to grant their requests so long as they don't

make any unreasonable demands. By borrowing the power of the Divine Word Religion it surely wouldn't be difficult.

「Ah, that's right. If you want to go back, you could just go back to Earth you know?」

Hm? Huh?

「We can go back!?!」

Kudou-san, who had been patiently avoiding speaking until now, seemed to have stood up and yelled that without thinking.

「It's possible, right?」

Vampire girl turns around to look at me to get confirmation. Eh? Umm. It's not possible though?

I want to say that, but the gazes of the reincarnators full of expectation pierce into me at full strength. Vampire girl-l-l! Don't drop unnecessary bombs!

# Chapter 315: Hoping to return home

Because of vampire girl dropping an extra-large bomb, the reincarnators are in uproar. Even vampire girl's previous threats had no restraining effect of them, such is the buzz in the air. Surely that indicates just how sensational it would be for them to be able to return to Earth.

However, unfortunately I can't do that. It's certainly the case that I had previously asked vampire girl about returning to Earth. However, that was only in the context of after everything was settled. The context of after the System is destroyed. Not in the current context where the System is still going strong.

The reincarnators are not able to return to Earth. The reason for that, is they have the  $n\%I=W$  skill.

Originally it was just a mysterious skill, but the effect of it is to link the reincarnators to the System in this world. The reincarnators are not originally inhabitants of this planet. Under normal circumstances the System on this planet would not have had any particular influence upon them after their original deaths and they would have returned to the normal cycle of reincarnation. Their souls were forcibly inserted into the System, and they were granted a second life. That is what the reincarnators are. So then, the thing that ties the souls of the reincarnators to the System, is the  $n\%I=W$  skill.

Because they have this skill, despite being outsiders, the reincarnators are able to receive the blessings of the System in terms of skills and status values. At the same time, this skill prevents the System from having intimate and perfect control over them. If the reincarnators die, unlike the natural inhabitants of this planet, they are able to return to the normal cycle of reincarnation. Once the System has intimate control over your soul, you will be trapped into endlessly reincarnating inside this incessant hell from then on. To ensure that doesn't happen, while the  $n\%I=W$  skill grants the reincarnators the blessings of the System, it also manages them such that they aren't completely brought into the System, basically. Ultimately, the reincarnators are simply temporary visitors from the

perspective of the System and this world.

In short, the  $n\%I=W$  skill is extremely important to the reincarnators, but in this instance the skill gets in the way. Skills are something that are attached to the soul. In addition, the  $n\%I=W$  skill that is particularly essential to the reincarnators amongst all the skills, is firmly bound to their souls. In further addition, the  $n\%I=W$  skill is the bridge that connects the reincarnators to the System. In other words, it's tied to the System. It cannot be disconnected. In yet other words, the reincarnators cannot be taken out from this planet where the System is.

If the System is destroyed, then that bond will vanish. Therefore, in the context of that being done I had asked vampire girl and oni-kun whether or not they wanted to return to Earth. It seems like vampire girl took a broad interpretation of that, and misunderstood that it would be possible to return right away. In practice, I am already no longer under the influence of skills in general, so I can go to and from Earth. However, that is something I am able to do because I don't have any skills, and to take the reincarnators from this planet it would be necessary to either destroy the System, or for them to have no skills like me.

There does exist a skill that enables getting rid of skills, after a fashion. A method to offer up the power of one's skills. However, when sensei applied that on Natsume-kun and his skills were taken away, the  $n\%I=W$  skill was the only one remaining. That's just how important  $n\%I=W$  is, and how difficult it is to remove it. Well, since it's an interface for conveying the influence of the System, I'm sure it's impossible to use the System's power from the inside to detach it. That being the case, there's no other method to detach it other than to become a god like me. What's with this impossible video game? Nai wa.

Well then, as for the possibility of using my own power to detach  $n\%I=W$ , it's doubly impossible. After all, this is something made by that D you know? There's just no way some meagre person like me can do something about it okay. Anything and everything concerned with the soul requires amazingly high level techniques. It's not something a newbie god with only ten-odd years of experience can do anything about. If I forced myself

to try something, I'd be scared of making the souls pop like a bubble.

And so, in conclusion, it's impossible to return.

It's like that but, now then, how shall I explain that? Ah, well anyway, it's not like I gotta explain the whole theory in detail for a start – it would be enough to simply say it's impossible you know. Starting with Kudou-san, a number of the reincarnators are looking at me with eyes replete with incredible anticipation. Maybe it would be bad to say “It's impossible” in this atmosphere?

「Truly, can we return?」

Kudou-san seems so overcome with emotion that she's moved to tears. Ahh. Yikes. Yeah, indeed, if you have lingering attachments to Earth then you'd want to return, right. Besides, since they have practically been living under house arrest in the elf village, from their perspective it has been a difficult life, so I guess it's inevitable that they would become particularly homesick huh. Try thinking about my feelings since I gotta deny the possibility in this situation!

Dammit! That darn vampire girl! She really fucking dropped an unnecessary bomb!

The ones who quickly noticed that I appeared hesitant to speak, were vampire girl and oni-kun. Vampire girl inclined her head in doubt as if to say “Eh?” and oni-kun kept glancing at me repeatedly, avoiding my eyes. The two of them perceived the faint turmoil in me, and seemed to realise that it wasn't possible.

Then, because of the reaction of those two, little by little the other reincarnators began to notice that something was off. The astonishment replete with the hope of returning, gradually turned into anxiety. Kudou-san, who had shown the most overt delight, somehow seemed to be staring at me with fawn-like eyes.

Ahh. Vampire girl, you really fucking dropped an unnecessary bomb on me. After all, if they'd never had hope about being able to actually return from the beginning, then they'd likely never think about such a thing. Without having the hope in the first place, they wouldn't have despair

either. Since their hope has been strangely brought out, when they understand that it is an illusion then their disappointment will be huge.

「It's impossible.」

I resolve myself and simply speak that. Immediately following that, an indescribable atmosphere breaks out.

Vampire girl seemed to be just about to speak, so I activated my Evil Eyes and compelled her to be still. She was probably about to blurt out something like “Eh, but you had said before that we could return though?”, but I'd rather she doesn't say anything further.

Certainly, in the case where the System is destroyed, it would be possible to return. However, I'm not intending to bother myself with what happens after the System is destroyed. My agreement with D doesn't cover that either. Besides, as to whether or not I will be able to do it after the destruction of the System, there is no guarantee.

If it was just the pair of vampire girl and oni-kun, then if I made the preparations beforehand then I thought I might be able to manage it, which is why I had made that proposal before. However, I don't have either enough time or raw energy to make the preparations for all the reincarnators. I can manage two or three people. What would happen if I was overly honest and revealed that now? Obviously there would be a scramble for the limited places. If it's impossible to return everyone, then it's better that everyone stays behind. At least that way, there won't be any conflict in the scramble for the limited places and neither will there be any deep resentment from those who lost out.

The silence is so complete it's painful. During that, Kudou-san sat down onto her chair with a thump. Or rather than sitting down, it's might be more accurate to say that she lost strength and collapsed and the chair just happened to be there. That's just how lifeless Kudou-san's expression was. Without saying anything, she hung her head. In addition to Kudou-san, there were several others who couldn't conceal the disappointment on their faces.

For unnecessarily stirring up hope, I'm sorry.



Even vampire girl felt uncomfortable in this atmosphere, and had an awkward expression. Seeing that, I cancelled the Evil Eye that I had activated on vampire girl.

「For today, let's leave this matter here.」

I said that and stood up. There's no longer any point in having a debriefing session with the mood like this. The reincarnators also need some time to think about things I'm sure. As if escaping from the frozen atmosphere in this place, I quickly moved to go outside. Somewhat flustered, vampire girl and oni-kun followed after me. Nobody tried to stop us as we left, and we departed the tree house. The closing door separated us from the reincarnators.

## S32: Reborn

There was no other way to describe the atmosphere in the room after Wakaba-san and co left, except to say that it was the worst. Kudou-san, who is usually keeping everyone together, is crestfallen due to Wakaba-san saying that they can't return to Earth.

I don't know what the situation was like in this village. However, based on the ambience, I can conclude that they were somehow getting by, with Kudou-san at the core. The heart of the person who was at the core, is now fracturing. In this situation where everyone is anxious about the unknown future, with the fact that the person who formed the reliable core of the group has gotten disheartened, that appears to be casting a particularly heavy shadow over everyone's hearts.

"I want to go back to Japan" – I think that is something that all of the reincarnators have thought at least once. I myself have thought that many times. The civilisation of this world is no match at all for Japan and there are many times when it feels lacking. Most of all, I want to meet with my family who were separated from me by my death. And eventually, I even thought this – "ahh, if I could only go back to Japan".

Despite me being the prince of a major country, blessed with a luxurious environment, I have thought that as well. The others aside from me are surely carrying even more intense feelings. Kudou-san's current state gives a graphic account of that. They were pent up in this elf village, leading a life devoid of freedom. Perhaps for all of them, it would be a matter of course that they would want to go back to Japan.

「Shinow」

Breaking the silence, Shinohara-san called out to the tied up Kusama in a cold tone. I recalled that Shinohara-san often treated Kusama like a gopher and called him Shinow. But, unlike back when she called out to him affectionately, now her tone is carrying a sense of hostility.

「Wh, what?」

「Is there really no way to go back to Japan?」

In response to that question, Kudou-san raises her head, surprised.

「The attitude of that lot just now, was suspicious, you know? They gotta be hiding something, right? Besides, if there really was no way to go back, then such a thing wouldn't come up in the first place, right?」

Due to the conviction in Shinohara-san's words, the gazes of everyone in the room focused on Kusama. Seemingly becoming frightened of everyone's menacing looks, Kusama began to squirm and Ogi, who was tied up with him, grimaced.

「I dunno! I don't know! Really! For real! I really don't know anything about that okay!」

Kusama desperately defended himself. Based on his attitude, I can't believe that he's telling a lie. However, perhaps unable to discard the ray of hope, Kudou-san rushed over to Kusama and grabbed his shoulder.

「Hey, if you know something then tell me! Please!」

「I really don't know, okay! If I could go back then I'd also want to go back and read more manga!」

Although Kusama gave a dumb reason for wanting to go back to Japan, his tone was sincere. Thought it felt more like that it was forced out of him by Kudou-san's intensity, rather than it being the real reason for him wanting to go back.

「Calm down, class-rep. Kusama is saying that he doesn't know, yeah? Cool your head a bit, okay?」

As if intervening, Tagawa gently pulls Kudou-san away from Kusama.

「You just don't understand because you've been outside though! Just what do you think we've been through while living here!? You're the one who's been off having fun adventures!」

Completely unlike her normal self, Kudou-san raises her voice in disparagement.

「Ohh?」

However, it seems she trod on a landmine.

「Fun adventures? Having my relatives killed, and fighting on through sickening battles in order to get revenge, is a “fun adventure”!?!」

This is bad!

「Tagawa! Restrain yourself!」

I immediately rushed over to Tagawa, and pinned his arms from behind. If I hadn't done that, it seemed like he might have gone on to strike Kudou-san. Having slipped out of the rope before I noticed, Kusama was also standing protectively in front of Kudou-san.

「Ah.....」

Behind Kusama, Kudou-san has been overawed by Tagawa and had collapsed to the floor with the blood drained from her face. Based on the colour of her face, I don't think it was just due to her being overawed though.

「.....My bad. I blew my top. I'm okay now. Let me go please.」

After calming his breathing that was disturbed during his rage, it seems that Tagawa has regained his composure. I believed his words and so released his arms. Tagawa threw a glance at Kudou-san, then turned around without comment, leaving up the stairs to return to his room.

「Ah..... I'm sorry.....」

Kudou-san speaks that simple word of apology to Tagawa who is no longer here. Without rising from where she was sitting on the floor, she stayed there with a downcast posture. With her body trembling, a faint sob could be heard.

Again, the room is filled with a heavy mood. I think Kudou-san was at fault just then. I hadn't known it either, but because she hadn't known that Tagawa had been fighting in such circumstances, she insensitively touched on that sore spot. Tagawa's words didn't have an impact on Kudou-san alone, as the boys who had talked of adventures as if admiring them also looked uneasy. Although she hadn't known, Kudou-san is at fault for carelessly treading on Tagawa's landmine. But, despite saying that, I have no intention of condemning her.

「“I think it’s meaningless to talk about which would have been better”, huh.」

Unintentionally, I voiced Kyouya’s words from earlier. While I had refuted the words that he’d spoken afterwards back then, perhaps I can agree with this part. Each and every person, walks down their own individual path. It’s natural for those paths to each have their own joys and sorrows. It’s inevitable for people to brag about the sorrows that they went through. Since no matter what happened, the past cannot be changed. People must not focus on the past, but look to the future.

「Class-rep. We have already died once.」

We died once and then we were reborn in this world. That past cannot be changed.

「We died. Those of us here now, even if we have memories of our past lives, we are not the same. We have been reborn. In a new life.」

Class-rep, who is crying her eyes out, turns towards me. In her expression there is a sense of confusion at why I would be saying something so obvious at such a late stage, along with a certain amount of irritation as well.

「Even if we returned to Japan, since we are now different people, we don’t even have a place to return to.」

Class-rep gasps. Even class-rep should have known that logically. It’s just that she didn’t want to acknowledge it. Even though our appearance is similar to that in our previous lives, there’s no strong resemblance. There’s even those like Katia whose gender has changed. That alone makes one a different person. Even if we went to Japan looking like this, we have no place to return to. We are already residents of this world.

「Let’s think about the future. Such as what we want to do. Or what we should do.」

Saying that though, when I think about what I could do by myself, I have doubts. From now on, what on earth should I do?

——Atone.

I felt that those cursed words that had been echoing through my head all this time had gotten louder. When I get timid, it seems it'll influence my consciousness more.

——Atone.

Shut up! Just what are you saying to atone for? Just what are you saying that I, that we, should do!?

「Shun?」

Perhaps sensing something strange with me, Katia called out to me anxiously.

「It's nothing. It's just that I was also thinking a bit about what I should do from now on.」

I'm not lying. I actually have no idea what I should do from now on in practical terms. So many things are muddled up and the insides of my head are in such a mess that I couldn't sort things out either. However, for anything relating to the future, perhaps the expression "at my wits' end" fit the situation to a tee.

Until now, I have taken actions based on my own convictions. However, was there actually any meaning in all that in the end? Julius-nii-sama died, father was killed in front of my eyes, Sue committed patricide due to Yuugo's actions and the Kingdom has collapsed. In order to stop Yuugo, despite coming all the way to the elf village, in the end I collapsed without being able to do anything, then finally I heard that Yuugo had been used by Wakaba-san and co and disposed of. While I was unawares, a gigantic course of events occurred. The actions I had taken until now, were those based upon my own convictions, but I now feel that they were simply engulfed by that gigantic course of events.

So what on earth should I do? In the first place, is there even anything that I can do with Wakaba-san and co as my opponents? I don't feel that there is. Even just earlier, I wasn't able to offer any real resistance and couldn't do anything except to pathetically grovel on the floor.

——Atone.

I shake my head, to drive off my timidity and that curse. Despite that, the curse continues to ring. Even so, I can't do anything except to pretend that I can't hear it.

「Shun. Are you really okay? You're looking unwell.」

「Yeah. It seems that I'm still not fully recovered. I'll return to my room and rest for a bit. I'll cool my head there for a bit and think about what to do from now on.」

I responded to Katia's concerns like that, and began to walk back to my room. There wasn't anything unusual in my response, right? Due to this damn curse, it seems I've gotten emotional. Even during my arguments with Kyouya, I should have been able to do it more amicably. Kyouya surely has his own circumstances too, yet I got emotional and forced my own opinions on him. Next time, we should have a proper talk with just the two of us.

The opportunity for that, never arose. The world changed more rapidly than I had expected, without even giving me time to think. As if anything and everything was turning worse and worse.

# Chapter 316: Those who seem to want to be my friends are looking this way

「Guh-hah!」

My beautiful roundhouse kick connects and vampire girl collapses on the spot clutching her side. To cause a precise amount of damage to vampire girl, yet not send her flying due to inertia at the same time, is just how exquisitely controlled my roundhouse kick is. How admirable, even if I do say so myself.

「H, how unreasonable.」

Vampire girl is saying something while collapsed on the ground, but it seems I can't hear it? I tie her up with my threads, and then drag her off behind me. With normal people the scraping would seem likely to leave you covered in scratches, but hey, with your defensive strength it shouldn't be a problem. Stay there kissing the ground as much as you want.

「Shiro-san! Wait a moment!」

As I was dragging off vampire girl, oni-kun grabs my shoulder and stops me.

「I know that Sophia-san made a gaffe, but you have some responsibility for this as well, Shiro-san. Aren't you going too far?」

Da heck? While oni-kun is telling me this nonsensical stuff, I give him a long hard look. My ten pupils, which I normally keep closed, stare into oni-kun's eyes. Oni-kun wavered for a moment from the pressure from my Evil Eyes, but he endured and started speaking again.

「Your explanations are too brief. Shiro-san, while we are taking action based on our understanding of your brief explanations, there are limits to that. There is not enough “hourensou” (reporting, communicating and consulting) between us. The cause of Sophia-san's gaffe is Shiro-san's insufficient explanations.」

“Hourensou” (spinach)? Mmm, sounds delicious. Er, not.



Erm, so what's the problem? Is oni-kun trying to tell me to explain things more? Telling ME to explain things more! Nai wa.

「Shiro-san?」

「Hey-y!?!」

As I ignore oni-kun and start walking again, oni-kun seems bewildered and vampire girl raises a voice in protest while being dragged behind me.

「Shiro-san, are you listening to me?」

「Yeah, yeah! I think this treatment is rather unfair!」

I ignore the squawking of those two. Vampire girl is flopping around to try to escape from the binds, but I ignore that as well. Did you really think that would be enough for you to escape from my threads? Don't you know? You can't escape from god.

While dragging vampire girl along, we head towards the destination. Vampire girl continued making a racket, but it seems that oni-kun gave up along the way and followed in silence. While he is being quiet, since he's following us, it seems that he doesn't agree with this.

「This is.....」

However, his silence was broken the moment the destination became visible. In contrast to oni-kun who opened his mouth, vampire girl closed her mouth the moment she saw it. Well, it's overwhelming isn't it. There's a super huge UFO right in front of us after all. My destination was this UFO. This is the spaceship that Potimas tried to use to attempt to escape from this planet at the very end.

I ignore the dumbfounded pair and step into the UFO without pause. Of course, vampire girl is also dragged along behind me without pause. After being left behind, oni-kun rushes to catch up and resumes following us. Both oni-kun and the still tied up vampire-girl look over the UFO in curiosity. Because it's so damn large, simply walking through it is tedious due to the distances, but even so I don't think you'd get bored looking at it. At any rate, since this UFO was created under the assumption of going through a long journey in space, it is furnished with equipment

appropriate for such a journey. Since those can be seen, it is probably interesting enough simply to observe such things.

Well, since vampire girl is still tied up, seeing her observing things while stretching out like a shrimp is awfully surreal though. I understand that she can't see without taking such a posture, but I think a lady shouldn't allow herself to be seen like that. Eh? Just who is it that tied her up? That is one thing, this is another.

The observation tour ends with the inclusion of the destination. At my destination was a place that could also be called the innermost part of the UFO and there was the Demon King facing some monitors, with Mera on guard duty with her as well. Having had an all-night vigil, Mera gives off a sense that he might even be standing up while unconscious.

「Oh? Welcome.」

The Demon King notices us and gives a greeting. While the conference between us and the reincarnators had been going on, it seems that she moved to this UFO. Well, that's why I had come here as well.

「Has Sophia-chan done something again?」

「What do you mean “again”, Ariel-san? With the way you're putting it, doesn't that make it sound like I'm always doing something?」

Eh? What is this girl saying? Her lack of self-awareness is scary. See, even the Demon King is making a wry smile you know.

「Shiro-chan too – don't bully Sophia-chan too much okay?」

This is not bullying, ma'am. This is what's called educational guidance, ma'am.

「So, what happened?」

「Well, you see...」

For some reason the Demon King asks that while looking at oni-kun instead of me, and oni-kun responds to the Demon King's question without raising any doubts about that aspect. Yep. That's the correct way to deal with this. While it might be correct, the fact that it seems to be

saying that I cannot be relied upon is annoying in its own way. I can do it if I try you know! It's just that I don't try, but I could do it if I did try! I think?

「Ahh. So that's what happened.」

Having listened to oni-kun give a basic explanation of the circumstances, the Demon King looked at vampire girl with an “ack” expression.

「Well, it was partly Sophia-chan's fault for making a slip of the tongue, but I guess Shiro-chan holds most of the responsibility for not explaining things properly.」

Objection! I cannot be at fault! I did nothing wrong!

「What's the actual situation? Can they really not go back to Earth?」

Suddenly, the Demon King asks me that with a serious expression.

「Impossible.」

I simply replied with that.

「Yup. If Shiro-chan says it's impossible then it probably is impossible. However, why is it impossible, what is the reason for that? It's because she didn't hear such details that Sophia-chan made a slip of the tongue. You know how critical information is, right? And so Shiro-chan, you're the only one who knows everything about how valuable various bits of information are. You gotta consider Sophia-chan's situation since she can barely determine the credibility of the information she is given.」

Being gently admonished like this by the Demon King, I can barely prevent myself from showing a sulky expression. Are you my mother or what? Ah, you're my granny, sorry.

「Shiro-chan, since you're always trying to complete anything and everything entirely by yourself, you're careless when it comes to working with others you know. You think that talking with others is unnecessary. So you see no need to try to talk. Since you can't bring yourself to do that you then gotta do everything by yourself. So you're basically a natural

loner.」

That's some awful stuff you're saying but I can't deny it.

「Well, I also think that it can't really be helped either you know. I myself was just the same before I met with you, Shiro-chan. I guess it's the fate of those with outstanding abilities」

Just by looking at the status values of the Demon King, without question she is the strongest person in the world after all. Even with her subordinates in the spider army, since they were increased simply by using the Spawning skill, they're more like underlings who are avatars of herself anyway.

「That being said, Sophia-chan and Wrath-kun are your friends you know. So even if you're bad at communicating, wouldn't it be better to stop avoiding it and face them properly?」

Eh? Friends? Okay? Friends. Hmm. Ah, I see. Vampire girl and oni-kun are my friends huh. To have actually noticed that, that must make you a genius I guess, Demon King? Eh? I don't really get this but somehow it's all become confusing you know?

# Chapter 317: Pals

Author's note:

Summary of the previous chapter – Demon King says「You guys are friends!」and Shiro goes (WTF) “S, say whhaAATT!!” (MIND BLOWN)

What are “friends”? It’s a noun. Yep. That’s not really wrong, but that’s not what’s being referred to here is it.

What are “friends”? A relationship where you do the same things. A business relationship, where you have the same status. Kindred people with similar tastes. There’s slight variations between these examples, but they have similar meanings. In other words, it refers to a group who are similar.

Are we actually similar though? To be blunt, we’re not similar in terms of combat ability. I am outstanding and the others are far behind. It would be hard to say that we’re a group in that regard. However, it can be said that we are a group in the sense that we have the same objective.

That being the case, are we really “friends”? Wouldn’t that be incredible. For me, who has always thought of myself as being a loner since my previous life, to have actually made friends already!

Erm. Ermmm. So how exactly do you deal with friends again? Please teach me, o exalted one!

「Shiro-chan isn’t recovering from her freeze. This is hopeless. It was too early for Shiro-chan to deal with the concept of friendship. I’d been sure that she’d been putting in the effort and had achieved results too.」

「Umm?」「Wrath-kun. As you can see here, Shiro-chan is a child whose emotions are still highly undeveloped. You mustn’t be tricked by her appearance or atmosphere. So when Shiro-chan is about to do something unreasonable, it’s generally because she’s simply using violence to cover up the fact that something is inconvenient to her. See? Putting it that way, she sure sounds like a child, right?」「Uh, umm.」「Because of that, when you think she’s doing something bad, you must deal with her not in the

sense of stating an opinion, but in the sense of scolding her. Don't expect her to ever improve if you don't do this.」 「Scold her? Me?」 「Sophia-chan is like that, so I can only rely on you.」

「Hey! What do you mean by “like that”!?!」

It's kinda noisy out there, but currently I'm desperately thinking about pals so I wish they'd be quiet. Ermm, the friends I know... are the party members in the games I played, right! I see, like with party members I can appreciate them when I feel so inclined and when they're annoying I can just kick them out! That being the case, I had briefly considered patting vampire girl on the head in appreciation but for some reason when I look at her making a racket while still trussed up like a bagworm, I got annoyed and kicked her.

「Why was I kicked just now!? Hey! Why!?!」

Silence. That's just how friends are, right?

「It feels to me like Shiro-chan has established a fundamental flaw in her understanding, but well, whatever.」

「Ariel-san, please don't just give up here.」 「Putting that aside...」

「Putting that aside!?!」

The Demon King and oni-kun are having an exchange like something from a comedy skit. However, one of them has a serious expression – the Demon King. It seems to be something important.

「Shiro-chan, what do you think about this?」

The Demon King gestures with her chin at the monitor while asking me that. Due to her grave expression, it seems that oni-kun and vampire girl realise that this is a serious matter. They focus their attention on what's written on the monitor..... though vampire-girl is still trussed up like a bagworm.

「Where is the problem here?」

Oni-kun spends some time reading over the article projected onto the monitor, but it seems that he doesn't see the problem that the Demon

King spotted. Because vampire girl has uselessly high pride she won't say that she doesn't understand, but from her expression it seems she doesn't understand either.

「This is definitely a problem.」

The Demon King is gazing at the contents, seemingly confounded. What was written there was a piece of Potimas's sort-of diary. It seems that because he had a diligent personality he would write about the events of the day in his diary and without missing a single day. Well, since he's simply just robotically writing down the events of the day in a plain manner, I feel that it's difficult to call it a diary though. Basically, there's almost nothing about his personal impressions. In some places he does write things that feel like his feelings on his research, but that's extremely rare. Since the writer almost never conveys his emotions, it's not really a diary I guess.

However, in the portion that the Demon King is pointing to, Potimas's emotions can be seen for once in the contents. What's contained within there, is impatience. And suspicion.

〈The total amount of MA Energy has suddenly deteriorated substantially. The cause is unknown. It likely has a connection with the dimensional quake that was simultaneously observed by our equipment, but at present I cannot say what. This is clearly an abnormal event. Such a thing has not occurred once since the System was put into operation. Has a serious defect occurred within the System? Is it safe to stay on this planet? It is uncertain. I have been forbidden to depart from this planet by Gyuriedistodiez, but perhaps I should prepare to escape anyway.〉

Yup. It's that. That particular incident perpetrated by the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King. By meddling with the use of Dimension Magic, they caused an explosion in a classroom in Japan. This is an entry from the time when the event that caused us reincarnators to reincarnate into this world occurred. Owing to what was perpetrated by this pair, we reincarnators were born in this world, and also the Demon King became the new generation Demon King in order to desperately secure the MA Energy that had been lost in the aftermath.

Vampire girl and oni-kun have already heard a summary of this incident, so they wouldn't be astonished about reading that aspect. That's probably why they're baffled as to what the Demon King is questioning them about. However, this is a big problem. After all, the one who wrote this is Potimas.

「What does this mean? It wasn't Potimas who instigated the Hero and Demon King?」

Yep. That's the point. With regards to Potimas being the one who induced the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King, what's astonishing is the fact that the mastermind actually turns out to be someone else. Eh? It's possible that those two simply did it by themselves you ask? There's no way that a bunch who didn't even know the first basics about the System would be able to do such a thing you know. There would have had to have been someone who taught them about the System. Without that, ignorant humans couldn't possibly have gone beyond space and time to actually reach D in that classroom. Because even Potimas didn't know about the existence of D it seems.

.....And having concluded that, the culprit is obvious. The Demon King should realise this too. It's just that she doesn't want to accept it.

「That's right. Everything is my responsibility.」

The voice of a third party who wasn't amongst us is heard. The one who had appeared via teleporting through space was the person I had expected. An administrator of this world, wrapped in black full-body armour. That person being Kuro, aka, Gyuriedistodiez.



# Chapter 318: Weren't we friends!?

Good evening everybody. Welcome to the deciding match to determine the number one in this other world. The reigning champion is Administrator Gyurigyuri. The challenger facing him is the Demon King. God Vs the Demon King might be a common development, but precisely because it is common this is a traditional bout. Will god be the winner here? Or will the Demon King manage to overthrow him? Don't miss it.

Well now, the Demon King attacked before the gong signaled the start of the match! How dirty! However, this is the Demon King after all. Calling the Demon King dirty is a compliment!

The champion takes a solid hit from the surprise attack, and is blown back! A straight right to the head! The champion is unable to endure and stumbles! How did you view that exchange, spider commentator B-san?

Well, I believe that the champion intentionally took that blow just now, spider reporter A-san.

Meaning?

The champion was completely aware of the Demon King's surprise attack. However, he received it on purpose without dodging or guarding. This surely indicates that the champion believes that he has that much of an upper hand.

I see! By receiving the challenger's first attack on purpose, he aimed to flaunt just how big a difference there was between them! But oh! The Demon King doesn't stop there! The neck? Whether or not we can actually call that his neck I'm not sure, but anyway, his neck is grabbed and he's pulled down to the ground! She's straddling him now! This is the mount position!

「What is the meaning of this!」

Now the Demon King makes a demand! But while doing so, you can feel her resentment against the unresisting champion! Fight! This is an appeal to fight seriously!

「.....Sorry.」

However! The champion still shows no intention of fighting! Just what is going on here I wonder!? Has the champion lost the will to fight!? The Demon King starts punching the champion!

Phew. I've gotten bored with pretending to do a live coverage.

「Ariel-san! Wait! Stop that!」

Oni-kun stops the Demon King, who had been pounding Kuro in the face, by grabbing her arms from behind. Even while in oni-kun's arms the Demon King still keeps trying to punch Kuro, but she is pulled off by force and is unable to continue. During the battle with Potimas the Demon King lost the majority of her power. She's become so frail that she's as weak as she looks, or even more so. When oni-kun used his strength to pull her off, she wasn't able to resist him at all.

Good job, oni-kun. The current Demon King is like a sick person who needs complete bed rest after all. It's bad for her body if she gets a bit violent. That being said, without her being able to vent her feelings to some extent she wouldn't be able to accept the situation, so I thought it best to let her punch Kuro a few times and stayed out of it. He stopped her at a good time. Just what I'd expect of a man who can read the mood.

Eh? What about vampire girl? She's still trussed up like a bagworm and her mouth is agape since she's unable to grasp these events, but, so what?

「What is the meaning of this?」

「Sorry.」

When the Demon King lashes out that demand at Kuro while still being restrained by oni-kun, he simply repeats his response of "sorry". I give him a contemptuous look and go back to reading Potimas's diary that the Demon King had been looking at until just now.

〈While outside, I came into contact with one of the bodies that Gyuriedistodiez controls. This is unusual. I was asked if anything unusual had occurred, but without doubt he is referring to the sudden drop in MA Energy and the simultaneous occurrence of a dimensional quake. Of

course, I have no intention of revealing my own information. Instead I tried to probe him for information, but he himself didn't seem to know what had actually occurred. In the end we separated without achieving anything. I need to collect information on this abnormal event that even he himself didn't understand.〉

〈A new Hero has been chosen. He is the second prince of the Anareich Kingdom, Julius. I don't care about them, but the fact that a new Hero has been chosen means that Hero Dalthsmeig has died. Considering the timing it is likely connected to the dimensional quake from the other day. If Dalthsmeig caused the dimensional quake, then it makes sense. I am unable to confirm if a new Demon King has been chosen, but if the old one had been working with Dalthsmeig then he has probably died as well. And yet, Gyuriedistodiez is still alive. In other words, it means that they failed. Useless.〉

〈One of my newly born substitute bodies began to say strange things using Telepathy. It is implausible for a baby to use Telepathy when their sense of self would be barely developed, but the contents of the conversation was even more implausible. However, the contents themselves were genuinely interesting. Is this person a reincarnator with memories of a different world? When I think about where the MA Energy could have gone from that dimensional quake, I would never have expected it to flow to another world. It is unknown why something that should have been aimed at Gyuriedistodiez would do that, but it has certainly become interesting. Reincarnators, other worlds, souls that are different to our own. If I can use them, perhaps I will be able to achieve a breakthrough in my stalled research? It is worth making an attempt. In which case, I must secure the specimens immediately. Fortunately, the substitute body who had told me about the reincarnators, Firimes, also wishes to secure the reincarnators. I shall grant her that wish.〉

Erm, yeah. What to make of this. Just reading this vile stuff makes it feel like my soul is being shaved away. This is the attitude of a guy who doesn't think that bad stuff is actually bad and then just calmly carries it out. Whether it's the Hero from two generations ago or the previous

generation Demon King or even sensei, he doesn't see them as individuals and instead it's acutely clear from these short articles that he only sees them as tools. Well, I knew it already, but Po-no-ji sure is scummy!

So long as we have this historical data, we should be able to find out what happened with the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King, but I guess it's not necessarily to investigate that far. Or rather, I don't really want to look in detail. I can already see the basic outline. Well, I knew about it already though.

「You know, I had thought of Gyurie as being a friend and a comrade of my own accord, but, was that simply my misunderstanding?」

Oops. I'd been leaving them alone but the exchanges between the Demon King and Kuro have gotten rather serious. The Demon King seems about to cry at any moment you know. Of all things, to make such a little girl cry, you're the worst, Kuro! ..... Well, putting such jokes aside, I guess I better intervene huh.

「Loser.」

Ah, I made a mistake. I unintentionally called out to Kuro with my inner voice. Well, whatever.

「If you don't explain things properly you won't be understood. Stop apologising and explain things from the beginning.」

Kuro, who was sitting up after having fallen on the ground, opened his eyes wide. Even the Demon King turned around to similarly stare at me in wonder.

「.....Eh? Isn't that a bit rich coming from you, goshujin-sama?」

Vampire girl was talking about something strange, so I kicked her for the time being.

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# Chapter 319: If good intentions could save the world we wouldn't be suffering

After silencing vampire girl, I listened as Kuro began to explain things once again. Well, since he added feeble comments like “It’s all my fault” and “due to my mistake” and such at every turn, a lot of unnecessary words crept in so it took time simply to listen to it all. But, well, to summarise it all in three sentences it’s like this:

Kuro appealed to the Hero and Demon King for a truce between the humans and demons. Po-no-ji instilled the idea that the administrators were evil into the heads of the Hero and Demon King. The Hero and Demon King went “Okay, let’s attack the administrators!”.

So why did this all happen? Well, to go into detail, the course of events is as follows. Firstly, the souls of the inhabitants of this world, especially the souls of the demons, had become especially degraded and the birth rate of the demons began to decline. Because of that the demons could no longer afford to go to war anymore. Kuro could foresee that the demons would die out at this rate, so he called out to the Hero and Demon King to have them form a truce.

So far so good. Kuro’s judgement wasn’t wrong. I don’t know what the situation was back then, but considering how desperately Argnar and Balto were running around trying to revitalise the demons, it’s not hard to imagine just how desperate they were to resolve it. In the first place, considering the fact that Kuro took action when he’d just basically been a spectator until then and hadn’t proactively taken any action, it’s possible to understand just how bad the situation had gotten. Perhaps if Kuro hadn’t taken action and the wars had continued, then it’s possible that by the time we reincarnators had been born that the demons would have been destroyed. Even if that’s an exaggeration, the situation would have gotten dire for sure.

However, this is where Kuro’s miscalculation occurs. Namely, that Po-no-ji had already gotten into contact with the Hero from two generations

ago and the previous generation Demon King. Thus, like he had persuaded sensei as well, he instilled into them the theory that the administrators were evil. The theory that the administrators made use of the inhabitants of the world, such as the Hero and Demon King, forcing them to fight in order to build up power and then to take it from them after their death. That's practically true, but if that's all you heard then of course you'd figure that the administrators were evil. Despite the fact that they were actually desperately working to revive the world.

Only the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King themselves know what they thought when they heard from both Kuro and Po-no-ji. Both of them are already dead though, so it's not possible to find out the truth. However, considering the result, they can be seen as idiots who impulsively challenged the administrators to a fight and pointlessly wasted MA Energy.

Why was it possible for the available MA Energy to decrease by such a large amount? It would be impossible to decrease the amount of MA Energy no matter how much one challenged the administrators to a fight. At least if the Hero and Demon King weren't involved.

There's various hidden elements within the Hero and Demon King titles. It's the consequence of that ill-natured evil god cramming in weird stuff. The Hero becomes stronger when facing the Demon King. That's because the Demon King is born from the long-lived demons and is often far superior to the human Hero, so there's a preventative measure granted to avoid a one-sided battle. In the case where the Hero and Demon King fight with a large discrepancy in capability, the Hero consumes MA Energy and is able to gain a temporary power-up as a result.

In fact, such a power-up has been provided to a situation other than that of the Hero vs Demon King. That situation being when they face gods. Currently the only proper god on this planet is Kuro. Sariel cannot move herself since she's a part of the System. In other words, the only one who can take action against outside enemies is Kuro.

The gods are in a territorial battle over the possession of planets. This planet was abandoned by the dragons because there was no profit to be

had from a place that was on the verge of ruin, so it would be unlikely to be targeted. However, it can't be proven that it would never happen. It can't be proven that the dragons who gave up the place would never return for a start, and perhaps some stray god might unexpectedly turn up. The Hero and Demon King are there as a means to oppose such gods. When the Hero and Demon King challenge a god, they consume MA Energy and are able to get a power-up.

Of course, it's not like they'd be able to win against a god that easily for a start, and the amount of energy required to be able to contend with a god, even temporarily, is not something that can be safely squeezed into a single person. In addition, since the opponent is a god, the amount of MA Energy consumed is incomparable to a Hero vs Demon King battle. Even so, such a function exists. In addition, to be blunt, this function can also be applied to the administrators.

WTF? Yeah, exactly. If this was an online game, this would be like allowing players to make suicide attacks on the GMs. And on top of that, using it would be capable of bringing down the server. You'd have to be stupid to have a feature that makes it possible to overturn the foundation of the game itself. That's not a feature, that's a bug.

However, the answer in this case is "that's not a bug, that's a feature". After all, the one who created it is that evil god you know. I think that D wanted the inhabitants of this world to have the option to also challenge the administrators. If you asked her what's the point in that, I'm sure she'd simply say that it's "because it seems more interesting this way". For mere humans to challenge god. I don't know if doing that would be able to change this world, but for D wouldn't the event itself be enjoyable even if it was meaningless?

Yes it would. In other words, the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King decided to challenge the gods known as the administrators, consumed MA Energy and were successfully able to gain an enormous amount of power for an instant. As compensation, naturally a large amount of MA Energy was consumed and they lost their lives.

Probably in their own way they thought that they were doing something good I guess. However, the end result was simply that the MA Energy was wastefully consumed and world was put into a predicament. To make things worse, us reincarnators from another world were killed off so fucking unnecessarily. What a bunch of clowns huh.

Now then, I guess you've noticed, right? The fact that in the course of events thus far, Kuro isn't particularly responsible for the mess.

「Based on what you said, doesn't the fault lie mainly with Potimas?」

「Hardly. It's my responsibility for failing to explain the situation properly to the Hero and Demon King.」

Against the Demon King's reasonable opinion, Kuro stubbornly argues that it's his fault. Even during the middle of his explanation he repeatedly emphasised that it was his fault.

In practice, it can't be declared that Kuro has no responsibility at all. I don't know what explanation Kuro gave to the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King, but if he had been able to sufficiently gain their trust then all this wouldn't have happened. Instead they found him less trustworthy than Po-no-ji. How sad.

That being said, it's obvious that the most fault lies with Po-no-ji who deceived the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King. Going by what I've seen in Po-no-ji's diary, Po-no-ji didn't particularly trust those two and they independently went and self-destructed all on their own, it seems. It's likely that from Po-no-ji's point of view, he was aware that he would have simply been lucky if they had defeated Kuro for him. Po-no-ji is just stupidly capable for being able to correctly figure out almost the entire truth from that situation. Which is exactly why he's so nasty though!

「Gyurie, what are you hiding?」

「I am not hiding anything. I was pathetic. That's all there is to it.」

The Demon King presses that question to him, but Kuro plays dumb. However, since things have come this far, it's blatantly obvious that Kuro



is hiding something.

「Because I taught them fragmentary knowledge about the System, this tragedy occurred. That responsibility is mine.」

Hmm. Kuro isn't lying. However, he's simply omitting something crucial. It's true that what the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King did was stupid. It's also true that Po-no-ji is the person who instigated those two. It's also true that Kuro is the person who taught those two fragmentary knowledge about the System. Put that all together and the developments went in a bad direction. In terms of who was the mastermind, it could be said that everyone involved was the mastermind. However, there's one person missing.

「The Goddess Sarel.」

In response to my murmur, Kuro makes an exaggerated reaction. His eyes are practically telling me "Don't say it!". But well, I'm going to say it anyway!

「The one who diverted the attack originally meant for Kuro towards D. That person is the Goddess Sarel.」

In response to my words, they all had their own particular reaction. Kuro stayed expressionless. All the life drained from the Demon King's expression. Oni-kun made an understanding expression. Vampire girl had a dumb expression showing she didn't get anything.

It's obvious if you think about it. Since not even Po-no-ji knew about D's existence, there's no way that the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King would have been able to launch an attack on her. Since the attack more or less went via the System, it wasn't impossible for it to reach D as the creator of that System. However, there's nobody with deep enough knowledge of the System to be able to achieve that. With the exception of the Goddess Sarel, an administrator of the System.

# Chapter 320: It's nobody's fault. However, Po – you're not included.

「Is that true?」

The Demon King questions Kuro, but Kuro answers with silence. His attitude has already affirmed the question though. The attack that had been aimed at Kuro himself, was diverted by Sariel without him knowing and on top of that it was the cause of the MA Energy decrease, the reincarnators being born, and also caused a difficult situation so it can't be helped that he feels responsible. If he hadn't met the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King, then he couldn't have become a target for the attack either.

Dimension Magic is not omnipotent. Dimension Magic, which is the evolved form of the super useful Space Magic, is basically incredibly useful. However, there's clearly things it can do and things that it cannot do. Well, you could say the same thing about skills in general though. To use a skill beyond the scope of what it was designed for requires a deep understanding of the magecraft underlying the very foundation of skill itself. There's few people who can use Space Magic, so for the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King to be able to use Dimension Magic means they were superior practitioners. Even so, they can't do the impossible. With Dimension Magic, it is impossible to attack a target that you've never met.

Just like how it's true with Space Magic, the first step for Dimension Magic is the specification of the target space. Once the space is specified the next step is to choose the magic to use against it. Such as teleportation or an attack. In addition, what can be used for the first step of specifying the space, is limited to either a place the practitioner has been to before or a person who they have met before. By meeting with the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King, Kuro became a potential target for attack. If he had been more cautious and had sent a subordinate instead of going himself or something similar, then Kuro

couldn't have become an attack target. Well, he probably would have needed to meet them himself in order to gain their trust though. It's just backfired on him.

In the end, Sariel interfered with the System to change the attack target to being D. To be blunt, I don't really get what Sariel's purpose was. I can think of several possible reasons, but I can't comprehend her way of thinking, so I don't know which of them is correct. Maybe she simply wanted to save Kuro, or wanted to harm D, or had some other expectation. I definitely wouldn't be able to understand without asking her in person. I don't have any intention of asking her in the first place though, as I'm just not interested. After all, just by meeting her face to face I become so irritated that I want to punch her.

Well, whatever her reasons, it's a safe bet that she herself didn't have any ill will behind it. It was also a situation where she had to act promptly to prevent an unexpected incident after all. I still feel that she's useless for failing to prevent it entirely though.

On the one hand, what if Sariel hadn't interfered for reasons unknown and the attack on Kuro by the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King had been successful. Kuro would have died or have been weakened due to a severe injury. In that case, Po-no-ji surely wouldn't have stayed quiet and the situation would have gotten chaotic. In the worst case, Po-no-ji would be reigning supreme. However, a portion of the MA Energy used to attack Kuro could probably have been recovered and for the MA Energy aspect that would likely have been better than the current situation. After all, if it had been used in this world, it would have been possible to recover some of the MA Energy, just not all of it. In addition, if Kuro had died the amount of MA Energy would probably have increased. It wouldn't be strange if the possibility to attack an administrator was inserted into the System for that reason. To increase the amount of MA Energy by absorbing a god, basically.

On the other hand, there's our current situation. Kuro got off completely unharmed and instead there was a massive decline in MA Energy. The reincarnators go "hi, nice to meet you" and the world is plunged into an

era of upheaval. I guess whichever route was taken, the situation would have gotten chaotic. However, Po-no-ji was successfully erased. He was like a pus or cancer on the world, and well, the removal of the one we needed the least has been achieved, basically.

Hmm. Thinking about it this way, both routes have their merits and demerits so it's hard to clearly say which one would have been better. However, if Po-no-ji had survived things would have definitely turned out for the worse, and considering only the future the current route is the better one I guess, right? Yeah, let's leave it at that. It's been a real nuisance for the reincarnators though.

Ah, except for me. See, if I hadn't been reborn in this world I would have stayed an ordinary spider and probably ended my life like that. By some kind of fate I've ended up becoming a god though, so I'm basically glad that I reincarnated. Oh? Thinking about it that way, good job Sariel? ..... I'll offer her a prayer later.

「Gyurie. It's not your fault.」

「No. Either way it's my fault. Since I was even unaware that it was my responsibility that things turned out this way, I can only think that I've been carelessly passing the time until now.」

The Demon King, after briefly turning her thoughts to Sariel, returns to comfort Kuro. Against that, Kuro can only smile like a glutton for punishment.

Yup. Kuro-san here hadn't known about the sudden drop in MA Energy for a start, and had been under the impression that the cause was entirely due to Po-no-ji after all. Once he then found out that he'd been unknowingly involved, this loser felt responsible. I bet a certain evil god carefully considered his feelings... then informed him all about it. If he hadn't been informed, he wouldn't have known about what was going on in the background either. Thus, in the end, about the only one around who could have informed him about everything would be that evil god. That evil god is seriously an evil god.

Eh? How do I know about all this you ask? I'd rather you don't take my

intelligence gathering abilities lightly! I had clones specialised in intelligence gathering directly observing all over the place for a start, while the analysis squad pulled out all sorts of System related information when hacking the System, and on top of that I also developed an Evil Eye of Past Sight, though it has limitations. This new Evil Eye can peek into the past and by using circumstantial evidence and what-not I can make successive conjectures and reach the truth. It is now possible for me to solve any unresolved incidents no matter what – I’m far beyond your typical “great detective”. Well, in practice, Past Sight is really hard to use, so I rarely use it though.

「If you think you’re at fault, then you just need to take action in order to make up for it.」

He’s starting to get annoying with his feebleness, so I’ll conclude things by saying that.

「That’s... true. I shall do that.」

Yep, yep. Yes you shall. Later I have a big project waiting for you after all.

The incident caused by the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King are preceding down the current route due to Sariel’s actions. Now then. In response to the incident that I am about to cause, what route will the inhabitants of this world choose I wonder? Well, whatever route they choose, the ending won’t change though.

Translation notes:

“However, Po – you’re not included” – this is a meme from the Bobobo-bo Bo-bobo manga.

“the first step for Dimension Magic is the specification of the target space” – See chapter 110 for the first example of space specification.

## S33: Brother and Sister

「Onii-sama!」

The voice that came at me contained so much fawning that I could practically hear a heart mark at the end. She came rushing towards me, her whole face lit up with a smile like a flower in full bloom. She only shows this expression and voice to me, while for people in general her expression doesn't change that much and when she responds she uses a disinterested tone with little intonation. Until a while ago, that's how she naturally behaved around me.

However, there was now a big difference between the past and present – in that she now clasped a weapon in her hand and came towards me in order to kill me.

「Ugh!?!」

「Onii-sama! Onii-sama!!」

I stopped the consecutive attacks with my sword. Why? Just how did things end up like this?

We went our separate ways in a foul mood. Our former classmates who had been pent up in the elf village. Tagawa and Kushitani-san, the two who had been adventurers outside. Sensei the elf. Yuri, who had been brainwashed by Yuugo and had come to attack the elf village together with the Imperial Army. And finally, Katia and I.

We had no idea what would happen to us from now on. Everything depended upon Wakaba-san and her side. As we were prisoners, depending on how Wakaba-san's side treated us from now on, our situation would change. If we accept at face value what was said at the discussion just earlier, it seems we won't be treated badly though..... At any rate, there's basically nothing that I can do is there.....

Until now, I had always tried to do my very best at the things I could do. However, the result of that, is all this. I wasn't able to stop Yuugo and let him die, I had intended to protect the elf village but the elves were

annihilated and Wakaba-san's side have gained the power of life-and-death over the reincarnators. In my own way, I had tried to do my best. Yet, the result was the worst. No, since I now know about the contents of Taboo, I understand that the end result was not the worst. Because the elves who I had tried to protect were in fact the source of all the evil acts that were leading the world to its ruin.

However, just because I understand that, so what. In the end, that hasn't changed the fact that there's nothing I can do. Inside the huge storm that is reshaping the world, wasn't I basically like a leaf being pathetically blown around in my ignorance? It's so absurd that I can't laugh.

Perhaps at some point I might have gotten conceited. No, not might have. I have gotten conceited. After becoming the Hero, I had been convinced that only I could stop Yuugo. I had firmly believed that with my strength that I would surely be able to do something. Like Julius-nii-sama had done, I had been convinced that I could become a person who could influence the world. Despite the fact that Julius-nii-sama had been carrying out his duties as the Hero since he was a child – it's precisely because he had been active for so long that he became a great man who could influence the world. Simply by having inherited the Hero's title, I had felt that I was standing in the same ring as Julius-nii-sama.

That arrogant thinking was just earlier, completely beaten down. Sophia made me realise just how insignificant my existence was, to the extent that I felt "is that all I am?". I couldn't do anything. I couldn't respond to anything. I couldn't even gain the opportunity to respond. Even if I had raised my voice into a scream, that probably wouldn't have reached Sophia. She would have snorted in derision, and then it would have been over. And that... was all I could do.

In me, a power capable of moving the world, doesn't exist. No power, no fame, no nothing. I've simply been toyed with by those who are truly moving the world, and used, no, more like ignored? Potimas might have tried to make use of me, but Wakaba-san's side didn't take the slightest bit of notice of me. They only looked at me like I was a mob character, as if it made no difference whether I was there or not. The ones who are moving

the world, are Wakaba-san's side, not me.

That by itself, might be fine. From the start, it's not like I had these grand ideas about what to do with the world. I'd only had the vague thought of being a helpful person like Julius-nii-sama in the future. Then Julius-nii-sama died, I became the Hero and everything started to go wrong. From that point, I thought that I simply had to do something about Yuugo and reckless rushed in, but this time it might be better if I stand still for a while and carefully think about what I want to do from now on. About what I can do... and what I can't do. There's so much that I can't do. However, if I properly accept that, then maybe I can just try to figure out what I can do bit by bit. I don't even know what it is that I can do though. Even so, I gotta do whatever it is that I can do. I don't want there to be any more victims like Julius-nii-sama at least.

「Katia.」

「Hm?」 「I want to talk for a bit. Is that okay?」

「Ah, of course.」

I decided that Katia and I should discuss what we're going to do from now on. We returned to the room where I had been sleeping earlier, and then sat down.

「Are Anna and Hyrinth-san okay?」

What I asked about first, was about my two companions who I hadn't seen any sign of since I woke up. Particularly Anna, since she had lost her life once during the battle. Due to my Kindness skill she should have just barely survived, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that I had successfully resurrected her, but I don't know what happened afterwards since I lost consciousness as a result of gaining Taboo.

「They should both be okay. I was told they had been isolated in a separate place. We're linked to Hyrinth-san with Telepathy, so if you're concerned you can just confirm that later.」

I see. Hyrinth-san has the Telepathy skill. So even if we're separated a short distance away, it's still possible to keep in contact huh.



「In that case, does that mean Hyrinth-san is also aware of the situation here?」

「Yeah. I've reported all the details of the situation that I could. Although they are also presently being confined, they're properly being provided with food and so on so they're not in discomfort, apparently. Anna has also woken up and is healthy, he said.」

That's great. If there's one other person who I'm concerned about...

「Katia. Have you heard anything about Sue?」

My little sister Sue was brainwashed by Yuugo and taken away. The last time I saw Sue was when she had murdered our father after being brainwashed by Yuugo. I'd heard afterwards that she'd been taken by Yuugo to the Empire, but I don't know anything following that. I didn't see Sue during the battle either.

「I don't know what happened to her. I've heard nothing.」

「I see. However, since Yuugo has died, that should mean that Sue's brainwashing has also been removed, right?」 「That should be the case.」

「Can she return to normal I wonder?」

My voice was filled with anxiety since I didn't know myself. While she was brainwashed by Yuugo, Sue had murdered her own father. No matter that she brainwashed, it's still the case that she killed her own father by her own actions. Even when the brainwashing has been removed, the memories do not vanish. For that reason, Yuri has apparently become emotionally unstable, having been similarly brainwashed. I'd heard that at the moment when the brainwashing had been removed, she'd seemed likely to commit suicide then and there. She's apparently been forcibly put to sleep for now to stop that, but afterwards she'll definitely need some kind of mental care. If she's in a similar situation to Yuri, then Sue is also in danger.

Besides, even if she can overcome that, I don't know if we can return to our previous relationship. No matter that she was brainwashed, far too much has happened. I don't believe that it'll be possible for us to

completely return to our previous relationship of brother and sister.

「There's nothing for me to say there. That's between you and Sue, Shun. What do you want to do? How will Sue respond? I think it'll depend upon that.」

I nodded my head to Katia's serious reply. It might be such a time, but I feel that Katia sure is reliable for being able to properly consider our situation and express her thoughts.

「Thank you.」

「You're welcome.」

In response to my frank appreciation, Katia had put on an embarrassed and trembling smile.

「Let's see. In my case, I hope that we can return to being close as brother and sister. That being said, I guess it will be impossible for us to completely return to how we were before. If we can at least reconcile then that would be a good start. Ideally, I think it would be good to use this opportunity for her to take some distance from me as her brother. At any rate, I guess nobody knows what will happen unless we can actually meet.」

「Distance from her brother.....」

Katia reacts to my words about Sue taking some distance. On her face is blatantly written the words "wouldn't that be impossible?"..... I think so too. Sue has an extreme brother-complex. She doesn't look at me as her brother but as someone of the opposite sex. In that regard, I can only see Sue as my sister, as being my family. Responding to Sue's feelings is not something that I can do. However, if she's unable to take some distance from me as her brother, then I don't think that anything can be done about that.

It's no lie that I wish for her to take some distance from me as her brother. However, I'd rather us return to our old relationship than for us to break apart on bad terms due to this incident. While I can't see her as a member of the opposite sex, I love her as my sister and a precious

member of my family after all.

At that moment, there was a knock on the door. When I replied, the one who opened the door and walked in, was Wakaba-san.

「Do you want to meet your sister?」

Then she asked me that with incredible timing.

「I can meet her!?!」

「Indeed.」

「Of course I want to meet her. Please let me!」

In response to my spirited request, Wakaba-san held out a hand. There was no explanation, but what will happen if I take her hand? I took her hand even though I was confused. The next moment, the scenery had changed.

「Where am I?」

「Onii-sama!」

When I spoke my question, what arrived first was not Wakaba-san's response but Sue's voice. When I turned around, Sue was there. There's nothing in her attitude showing something like fear or feeling awkward and wanting to avoid me. She runs towards me with a smile on her face.

「Onii-sama!」

While calling out to me in a fawning voice, she readied a weapon.

「Huh?」

A stupid sounding response leaked out from my mouth. I was able to react properly thanks to my daily training. As Sue aimed her sword at my heart and swung down without hesitation, at once I drew the sword at my hip and responded.

「Sue!? Are you still brainwashed!?!」

「No! I'm completely sane!」

Sue doesn't stop her attacks. While defending against that, I reached the

pinnacle of confusion. She's saying that she's sane, but I don't think anybody who would consider her sane!

「Sue! Stop that!」

「I have realised it! That this is the only way for me to obtain onii-sama!」

Sue's strikes are all focused on my vital points. There's no leniency in her attacks. She's seriously trying to kill me.

「By using this『Conquest』skill, I will be able obtain everything of onii-sama! Even onii-sama's heart and soul! Of course I will preserve your body once it's empty!」

My spine froze. I can't comprehend Sue's words. I don't want to comprehend them. I can feel a madness that I've never felt before from Sue. Either way, it's clear that Yuugo's brainwashing has had a negative influence upon her.

At any rate, I'm uneasy about this『Conquest』skill. When I use Appraisal on Sue, I see that she now has the『Greed』skill. That's one of the Seven Deadly Sins skills that Yuugo had possessed.

「Sue, when did you get that?」

「I had already satisfied the conditions before I had been brainwashed by him. But because he owned it I couldn't my hands on it. Once he died, not only did I become free, I was able to get my hands upon Greed!」

Sue doesn't stop her attacks while she talks. While also talking, I check the effects of the『Conquest』skill that Sue has.

『Conquest: When Greed is active, absorbs everything from the target's soul.』

So, what does this mean exactly? Greed has the effect of being able to take over the skills and status of a defeated opponent. Does this『Conquest』skill supplement that, making it possible to take everything from the opponent? However, if that is possible, then I don't understand the reason why Yuugo didn't use it. Ah, it's the Ruler Authority huh! One of the pieces of information I had gained from Taboo was

regarding Ruler Authority. It grants the authority to interfere with the System and is only accessible from those who own the Seven Deadly Sins skills or the Seven Virtues skills. It shouldn't be possible to activate the related skill unless the Ruler Authority has been established. Even though Yuugo had a Ruler skill, since he hadn't established his Ruler Authority, he couldn't use『Conquest』. In that case, does this mean that Sue has been able to establish her Ruler Authority? No, Sue isn't at level 10 in the Taboo skill. It shouldn't be possible for her to establish her Ruler Authority. In which case, she can't use『Conquest』.

「Sue! It's meaningless to do this!」

「Onii-sama! This is the only way left for me!」

It's no good. She won't listen to me at all. What should I do?

「Get away from Shun!」

Fire rushes towards Sue. At the other end of that fire is Katia.

「Katia!!」

「Come get me, Sue.」

And so, Sue shifts her target from me to Katia, and attacks. Why did all this happen? What should I do?

# Chapter 321: A scene of carnage

Yikes... Back out, back out. So this is what they call “a scene of carnage” huh.

What is unfolding in front of my eyes is a women’s battle. Imouto-chan and Ooshima-kun are carrying out a full-on battle over a single man. The look in their eyes is freaky. That look is... the intent to kill! You’ve done it, Yamada-kun! You sure are popular! This is what’s meant by “to be flanked by two beautiful women”! In addition, they both look like poisonous flowers.

On one hand is the crazy psycho yandere bro-con imouto. On the other hand is the cool and calculating gender-swapped girl who knows everything about being a man. Whoever you choose it seems problematic. Whoever you choose seems likely to dominate you too. Do your best Yamada-kun! I’ll cheer for you! I won’t do anything tangible though!

Or rather, before all that, what should I do about this feud?

.....

Do your best Yamada-kun! I’ll cheer for you! I won’t do anything tangible though!

Hey, it’s not my fault you know? The cause of all this is imouto-chan anyway. I think it’s appropriate for her elder brother Yamada-kun to resolve this! So, I shall leave everything to him.

While I had been talking about the truth behind the bombing incident caused by the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King, I was being pestered by this chronic complainer. The chronic complainer called imouto-chan. In short, “I demand to meet onii-sama.”

I’ve always had one of my clones with imouto-chan, but then she started talking endlessly to it like she was invoking some kind of curse. I figured that since she had cooperated so far that I might as well grant her that wish. With a ghastly appearance on the edge of insanity, she had grabbed my clone and continuously spoke to it okay? So scary! Even if this is just

via one of my clones, it felt like a never-ending horrific whisper. I might have nerves of steel, but there is still a limit to things!

Basically, that's why I decided to grant that broken imouto-chan's wish. Well, just letting them meet is fine I guess. There'd been a time when I had actually thought that. Indeed. It's true that imouto-chan was currently acting a bit unusually. So let me make the excuse that I never would have expected her to try killing him the moment she met him. After all, normally it'd be unthinkable for the onii-sama supremacist imouto-chan to actually try to kill her onii-sama, right? At least it was incomprehensible for me with my sensitivity of a rather normal person. Eh? What do you mean "You're not normal"? That's not the case at all. Or rather, if you're going to object to something surely it should be "You're not a person"?

While escaping from reality like that, I watch over the battle becoming more heated up. Imouto-chan's ice magic and Ooshima-kun's fire magic are clashing and cancelling each other out.

「Both of you! Stop this!」

When there's a pause Yamada-kun tries to intercede, but even that seems to fan the flames of war. Ack. Was it a mistake to bring Ooshima-kun I guess? Well, you know, I had thought that Ooshima-kun might be able to stop the rampaging imouto-chan, okay. When I saw imouto-chan rush in to attack Yamada-kun, I decided to also hurriedly bring over Ooshima-kun. I never expected that would actually make things more chaotic. Why is this happening? It's weird, right?

.....Is it okay for me to leave already? You know, "I'll leave the rest to you youngsters" and all. No good?

I wonder why it's come to this. When I thought I could clear up the problem with the troublesome imouto-chan, it mysteriously became an even more troublesome situation. Dammit. Yamada-kun, since you're her elder brother, I wish you had kept a firm rein on such a dangerous imouto-chan! Just who's the person who first brought in this powderkeg imouto-chan and created the current situation? Eh? Me? No, no. That is what's

called a false accusation. You see, that's something Natsume-kun did and has nothing to do with me. Eh? I was the one controlling Natsume-kun you say? LALALA! I can't hear you! I... can't... hear... you...!

Fine then..... From a practical point of view, imouto-chan becoming so fired up was caused by me. Well, once she shot her own father through the head, she likely thought that there was no going back for herself now. Her onii-sama didn't have romantic feelings for her in the first place. Since she committed that act right in front of her onii-sama, her hopes would have become incredibly slim. Hmm. While already on the path to betraying the Kingdom she was plagued with feelings of guilt, so I had Natsume-kun brainwash her, creating an established fact where she was brainwashed so that it couldn't be helped what she did though. It seems like it was pretty meaningless to try that excuse huh. I guess she felt completely trapped and overenthusiastically took action huh.

.....This is why it's hard for me to make use of others. In my case, I only take efficiency into account and whether they live or die. For my plans, I don't take into consideration what others might feel or think about it. I can't take such things into account. I don't understand such things anyway. So I just ignore them. Even if something inconvenient occurs because of that, so long as it doesn't become an obstacle to my plans then I don't care. At least, that's what I had thought.

The time when sensei collapsed with a pallid expression. The Demon King's expression at the time when she found out that Sarii's interference was behind the bombing incident caused by the Hero from two generations ago and the previous generation Demon King. I can't help recalling their expressions in the back of my mind. There's no way that I had taken action because I had wanted to cause such expressions.

Sigh. Even if I'm told about friends and such at such a late stage, just what do you expect someone like me to actually do? I don't know. I don't get such things. Besides, the project is reaching the finale. It's far too late to rely on such things as "the power of friends" anyway.

For now, I guess I'll do something about this mess. Yamada-kun's been getting the short end of the stick anyway. I'll stick my nose in, though I



doubt whether I'll be able to sort things out peacefully though, but it's surely better than doing nothing.

「Listen to me!」

However, before I do anything, the situation changes. A moment before imouto-chan's and Ooshima-kun's blades meet, Yamada-kun physically inserts himself between them, stopping them both. By catching their blades in his body.

「Eek!?!」

「.....ah.」

Imouto-chan and Ooshima-kun gasp. Imouto-chan's sword has pierced Yamada-kun's stomach and Ooshima-kun's sword has cut into the shoulder and is buried up to the collarbone. On top of that, Yamada-kun grasps both of them in his arms, stopping them from moving.

「Please. I beg you. Listen... to me. I don't want... to lose anyone else. So... so...」

I stop myself before I could move. Listening to Yamada-kun's heartbroken voice. I have no right to approach him because I have stolen many things from him.

Translation notes:

“A scene of carnage” – the word used for this (修羅場) can sometimes be used a bit like “catfight” (ie women fighting over a man) and also “crunch time” (typically for an author trying to meet a deadline).

“flanked by two beautiful women” – this is from the phrase 両手に花 which literally means “a flower in each hand” but is often used to mean “flanked by two beautiful women” (or, having a pretty girl on each arm) though can also mean “two blessings at once”.

“with my sensitivity of a rather normal person” – essentially the joke here is that Shiro is neither “normal” nor a “person” (human) and she's saying that calling her out on being “not a person” makes more sense than calling her out on being “not normal”.

“Why is this happening? It’s weird, right?” – think of Shiro saying this in a spaced-out tone.

“I’ll leave the rest to you youngsters” – the cliché place to use this phrase would be at an omiai (arranged meeting with strong possibility of marriage), when the adults leave to give the possible couple some space.

# Chapter 322: The boy who should have been a minor character

My overall impression of Yamada-kun, is that he's ordinary. Both in Wakaba Hiroyuki's memories and my memories from the current world.

In Wakaba Hiroyuki's memories of Yamada-kun, he was a plain boy that you could find anywhere. Grades – average. Reflexes – moderate. Appearance – ordinary. A schoolboy without a single conspicuous factor – the very definition of ordinary. If he appeared in a story set in modern times, he would be a mob character who wouldn't stand out from the background. That is Yamada-kun.

Well then, just where did Yamada-kun, who was an ordinary person in his previous life, end up in this life? He's like a protagonist amongst protagonists. The prince of a major country. The biological younger brother of the Hero. Born with cheat level abilities, yet he still steadily put in effort without conceit. If the opportunity had arisen, even without his Hero title he would have become a considerably influential person amongst the humans of this world. Also, after taking over from his dead brother, he had the determination to stand up for the sake of the world as the Hero. It makes me want to sarcastically remark just how protagonist-like this all is.

However, Yamada-kun's essence hasn't changed. For better or worse, Yamada-kun is ordinary. Under normal circumstances, he's not the sort of person who'd try to take the lead role in the middle of this huge stage. It would suit him to live outside of the stage, living a quiet and calm life. Without being the prince of a big country, without being the younger brother of the Hero, without his cheats. If he had been simply born ordinary in this world, then most likely Yamada-kun would have stayed a commoner and lived his life without incidents or poking his head into trouble I'm sure.

The reason why Yamada-kun became like a protagonist was because of the situation he was in. He was the prince of a major country. If it had just

been that then it might have been fine. However, Yamada-kun was in a very delicate position. He was the child of a concubine with low standing. However, his elder brother was the Hero. In addition, the queen's son was not good enough. Finally, Yamada-kun himself was a reincarnator. A genius is considered to be someone who demonstrates their greatness from a young age. What unfolded from there was, basically, something that frequently happens in storytelling.

With him being so capable, that's probably why a faction appeared that wanted to push aside the first prince who was the son of the queen and raise up Yamada-kun to be the next king. Because the queen feared such a possibility, Yamada-kun didn't receive proper education. However, the half-elf and muscle-woman who were his attendants took charge of his education instead. On top of that, because Yamada-kun was also a reincarnator he could grasp his position as a prince, so he was fortunate to be able to conduct himself appropriately by learning from the example of others. Completely betraying the queen's expectations, Yamada-kun continued to be renowned as a child prodigy. On top of that, not allowing him to receive education backfired upon her instead – he was regarded as a child prodigy who exceeded the average despite not receiving a proper education.

It wasn't something that he himself realised, but to others it would likely have been an awkward situation. Having the powerful support of his elder brother the Hero, he was called a genius. It was rather inevitable that the first prince got flustered. After all, even though Yamada-kun himself didn't want it, it had become a situation where those around him were supporting him in that way. If Yamada-kun himself had been allowed to be educated properly, he wouldn't have suffered the agonies that he did though.

Indeed, Yamada-kun didn't realise the situation that he had ended up in. If he'd been a true genius, then he would likely have noticed that fact and taken some kind of appropriate measures. He should have had some suspicions about why he wasn't able to receive proper education for a start, and also shouldn't have been unaware of the restless state of the

royal family. Because he was unaware, Yamada-kun is therefore ordinary. A mere highschooler wouldn't normally be able to understand the common sense and political circumstances of another world. Yamada-kun was treated as a genius because of what he had learnt in his previous life, which he then made use of since the time he was a young child to learn even more. It's not the case that he was a genius. It was simply that he had developed early.

In addition, to Yamada-kun's misfortune, a true genius was close by his side. In other words, Imouto-chan. Like a cloth absorbing water, Imouto-chan immediately learnt everything she was taught. As a reincarnator who had built up various things since his previous life, Yamada-kun was provoked into feeling that he mustn't lose to her. Yamada-kun, who had simply developed early, began to put in hard work. To those around him, he was a complete genius who worked hard.

And then, while still being in the same situation where he couldn't receive proper education, he unstintingly piled up the efforts that he could and he entered the academy while having made certain unusual connections with others. The duke's daughter, Ooshima-kun. The candidate for the next Saint of the Divine Word Religion, Hasebe-san. Sensei the elf. He also had a rival in Natsume-kun who was next in line to become the Sword Emperor of the Empire, and not only that but Yamada-kun was ahead of him. He was at the center of such an outstanding group of people. Everyone paid attention to Yamada-kun.

Even in such a situation, for Yamada-kun himself that was simply the normal state of affairs. I think it's likely that Yamada-kun considered himself to be ordinary and that an ordinary person like him wouldn't become the king. For a mob character like him, being able to offer some small support to his brother the Hero would have been good enough. Even that might have felt excessive to him.

Such a Yamada-kun became the Hero due to some kind of fate, and because he had this weird skill called the Divine Protection of Heaven it put me on the alert and he got thrown into the abyss. If he hadn't been born as the prince of the Kingdom, if he hadn't been a reincarnator, if he

didn't have a genius sister, if he hadn't been the younger brother of the Hero, if he hadn't become the Hero or if he hadn't possessed the Divine Protection of Heaven. If any one of those had been missing, then Yamada-kun wouldn't have become a protagonist. And he wouldn't have suffered so much either.

However, there is just one aspect to Yamada-kun that isn't ordinary. That is his sense of responsibility. He didn't want to shame himself as the prince of the Kingdom, as the Hero's younger brother or as the elder brother of a younger sister. The reason why the ordinary Yamada-kun earnestly worked so hard until now, is because of that sense of responsibility. So that he wouldn't be ashamed of his own position in life. Which is why, after becoming the Hero, he probably felt that he must take action befitting the Hero so as to not feel ashamed.

Which is why right now, Yamada-kun is fulfilling his responsibility as the elder brother.

「Sue, I cannot allow myself to be killed by you. Because I can't believe that would actually help you.」

While staring firmly into imouto-chan's eyes, Yamada-kun speaks to her. Imouto-chan has frozen such that she is unable to even avert her eyes.

「Sue, I cannot respond to your feelings. However, I will always be able to be at your side. As your brother. Is that so bad?」

.....That was a pretty decent way to turn her down flatly.

「Onii-sama, I, I was.....」

「The past cannot be changed. However, we are alive in the present. And, we are able to think about the future. Therefore, could you please consider a future of living together with me?」

.....Eh? In a complete reversal from turning her down just now, doesn't that now sound rather like a confession? Isn't imouto-chan going to misunderstand due to the way you phrased that?

「Y, yes.」

Yep. Going by her beet red face, that finished off imouto-chan. And Ooshima-kun has an incredibly hard to describe expression on her face. Like this, I feel that the scene of carnage has simply been postponed, but well, whatever.

Translation notes:

In Japanese, telling someone of the opposite sex that you want to be with them for the rest of your lives can be taken as an indirect marriage proposal.

# Chapter 323: The Hero and the Pope

Now that imouto-chan's rampage has been amicably (?) settled, it's about time that Yamada-kun gets some medical treatment before it becomes too late, right? He's created a pool of blood on the floor already.

「Ah!」

Yamada-kun's knee gives out and he drops down. It seems like he can't stand up anymore due to excessive bleeding. Even worse, because he lost his balance while imouto-chan's sword was still stuck into his stomach, his wounds got worse due to his flesh being gouged. It seems that Ooshima-kun's sword has slipped out after being buried into his shoulder, but that also likewise cut his shoulder apart. No matter that being the Hero raised his status values, he will still take damage when injured and that can lead to death. If Yamada-kun dies here then would this be the Bad End of the imouto-chan route? Or perhaps the Ooshima-kun route? The scene of carnage End due to two-timing perhaps?

「Onii-sama!?!」

「Shun!」

Having fallen to his knees and looking like he was about to collapse onto the ground, Yamada-kun was caught by imouto-chan. Ooshima-kun, who had just now discarded the sword she'd used to slash at Yamada-kun, began to formulate Treatment Magic in a rush. Hmm. However, in order to cure Yamada-kun's injury, isn't that going to be a bit lacking? With just Ooshima-kun's magic alone, it should be more or less possible to heal him enough such that he won't die, but his wounds will likely remain. Treatment Magic isn't omnipotent. With the magic above it, Miracle Magic, it would be possible to heal almost all injuries except death though. It can't be helped. If Yamada-kun was left with a permanent scar because of this then that would surely leave me with a bad aftertaste, so I guess I'll assist.

「Shiro-sama. Please leave this to me.」

Just as I was thinking that, a voice stopped me. On looking over my



shoulder, there was the Pope surrounded by several women who had all just entered the room. Ack, he showed up.

「Who are you?」

Ooshima-kun goes on guard against the group that suddenly appeared. Well, it's really us who showed up here suddenly by using teleportation. After all, this is the main temple of the Divine Word Religion in the Holy Country of Aleius you know. It wasn't the Empire that had been safeguarding Imouto-chan, but this place. In fact, Yamada-kun's homeland is right next door. Imouto-chan was just a stone's throw away.

「Pleased to meet you. I am the 57th Pope of the Divine Word Religion, Dustin the 61st. I am pleased to make your acquaintances.」

「The Pope of the Divine World Religion?!」

Perhaps Ooshima-kun was surprised that he was such an important person, or perhaps she was surprised that such a person would show themselves, but either way she's incredibly surprised. However, her surprise only lasts a moment, and she continues with Yamada-kun's treatment while being on guard against the Pope. Considering that she glanced at the sword she'd just thrown away, she's really being on guard here. Well, speaking of the Divine Word Religion, they are the group that had announced that Natsume-kun was the Hero and caused Yamada-kun to be trapped after all. As far as sensei had been aware, the mastermind who was manipulating Natsume-kun from behind the scenes was the Divine Word Religion, with the Administrators being behind them.

Hm? In a certain sense, isn't that actually correct? It's basically due to me for a start, and the Divine Word Religion was cooperating with me anyway.

「Please be at ease. We shall only assist with the treatment. Now that the elves have been destroyed, there is no longer any reason for conflict between us.」

The pope has an amiable and gentle smile. He simply looks like a good-natured old man. Also, he has a very calm and gentlemanly manner. He's emanating an aura that seems to unconditionally reassure people. It's not

like there's an actual skill in the System for that. It's likely a technique that the pope has developed naturally over many years. What he's like on the inside is totally not what he looks like though.

Even Ooshima-kun is bewildered by the pope's innocent aura. Using that opening, the women who came with the pope glide over to where Yamada-kun is, and then deploy Treatment Magic. Yamada-kun's shoulder injury is completely cured before imouto-chan or Ooshima-kun can even raise an objection.

Ooh. Their skill formulation and coordination is rather quick. Each of them individually are significantly inferior to Ooshima-kun in power, but by cooperating together to formulate a single skill they can raise the effectiveness of the skill significantly. I'd guess these women are candidates for the next Saint. Hasebe-san had been gaining prominence as the leading candidate, but there's no way that the pope would skimp on training others.

「I shall pull out the sword.」

「I'll do that.」

When one of the saint candidates reaches out her hand towards the sword that was still stuck into Yamada-kun's stomach, she was interrupted by Ooshima-kun.

「Shun, endure it for a bit, okay?」

As Ooshima-kun extracts the sword, Yamada-kun groans in pain. Then, Treatment Magic is immediately applied. Hrm. While watching over the treatment being applied, so that Yamada-kun won't have any scars left, I stealthily support Ooshima-kun's technique. There, that'll do.

Once the treatment is mostly completed, the saint candidates promptly separate from Yamada-kun, and returned to waiting behind the pope.

「.....First of all, thank you for your assistance with his treatment.」

「Think nothing of it. Thanks are not necessary. After all, only doing this much will not bring our atonement.」

Although she seemed reluctant, Ooshima-kun still gave thanks, yet the pope's reply seemed apologetic from the bottom of his heart. Is he really apologetic I wonder? Even I don't know the pope's heart. In the first place, I'm not really sure about the reason why he decided to show up himself at this time.

There was no need for the pope himself to show himself. If he hadn't shown himself here, the Divine Word Religion could likely have protected its image by indicating that the upper echelon was still brainwashed by Natsume-kun. That would still require a number of executives in the Divine Word Religion to be dismissed though, but compared to allowing the prestige of the Divine Word Religion to crash into the ground that would be a small price to pay. Either way their reputation will take a hit, but if they pushed all the blame onto Natsume-kun, then it would still be possible for them to recover. Despite that, since the pope as the person at the top of the Divine Word Religion has made an appearance, then that is no longer possible. By showing up in the same place as me when I'm known as the true mastermind behind Natsume-kun, that alone is enough for people who can figure out such things. Namely, that the Divine Word Religion was not in fact being manipulated by Natsume-kun, but rather that they were cooperating with me of their own free will.

As proof of that, Ooshima-kun is shifting her gaze between me and the pope, and has narrowed her eyes with a grim expression. That's a face showing that various things have been figured out. That's why I had intended to immediately return to the elf village once imouto-chan's rampage had been resolved. So why are you showing up so nonchalantly now eh?

「This is to take responsibility.」

As if he was reading my thoughts, the pope spills out that comment.

「It means that the Divine Word Religion is already finished.」

Followed by making a shocking declaration.

Translation notes:

“Bad End” – this is specifically gaming slang in the raw, referring to

something commonly seen in visual novels when the player has made the wrong choices and has failed. “Route” is also gaming slang, in this case referring to the “main heroine” (capture target) of a particular story route within the game, eg from dating sim type games. In other words, Shiro is jokingly treating Shun as a harem protagonist in a game where both Sue and Katia are “capture targets”.

# Chapter 324: If you say that you'll win anyway then you mustn't cheat

「What do you mean the Divine Word Religion is finished?」

The one who spoke wasn't Ooshima-kun but Yamada-kun. While being supported by imouto-chan, he got unsteadily to his feet. The Treatment Magic has healed his wounds for a start, and because of my secret assistance his lost blood has been replenished as well. However, even though what was lost for a moment has been replenished, it will take some time for that to spread throughout his entire body. Yamada-kun should be suffering from something similar to anemia right now, but I guess this is what's called "standing on your feet by sheer willpower".

「In the literal meaning. This marks the end of the Divine Word Religion's longlasting era.」

The pope smiles cheerfully. He's not putting a brave face on it. Hm? Really, what is this guy thinking?

「This place is inappropriate. Let's move to somewhere else to talk. Or perhaps you need to rest a little? I'm sure some time will be needed to prepare a place anyway.」

「I'm fine. Let's talk.」

In response to the pope's concern, Yamada-kun immediately shakes his head.

「In that case, please follow me. Ahh, what will you do, Shiro-sama?」

Erm? Mm. What to do-o? It's not like I'm uninterested in knowing what the pope is up to, but wouldn't it be kinda wrong for me to accompany them?

As such, I shake my head in refusal. After a pause I immediately use teleport to leave the place.

AS IF! I might have teleported away from that place, but the clone attached to imouto-chan is still there. Like this I shall overhear every little

detail about what the pope is scheming! Geh-heh-heh!

「Ah」

Or at least that's what I had planned to do. While sticking to Yamada-kun as they walked, imouto-chan seemed to realise something and put her hand into her clothes. Then she grabbed something and pulled out her hand. Yep. That "something" is my clone.

「Humph.」

Gyaahh!? Squished!? It was crushed!? My pretty little clone!? What the heck!?

Damn. Sigh. Well, I guess it can't be helped. The moment that imouto-chan crushed my clone, it's like her face was saying "maybe I should reveal my grudges huh?". I did make imouto-chan do various things after all. It's no biggie if she holds a grudge. I'm not going to complain over just one little clone being crushed.

I'll overlook you crushing one clone. In addition, I add imouto-chan's soul to the list of those to be protected when the System is destroyed. As recompense for her work thus far, I guess I'll not get involved with imouto-chan again. The original recompense that I offered was to not kill her brother, ie Yamada-kun, but I hadn't ever intended to kill him in the first place anyway. Work does deserve appropriate compensation and all.

Well, it does come attached with the condition that she won't become hostile to me though.

.....I quit. Even aside from the clone that was attached to imouto-chan, I have clones that are monitoring the pope and others. So if I decided to peek then it would be easy to do so. But, I'll quit. I bet that the pope is also taking into account that I'll peek, so I'll avoid exposing myself.

In all probability, the pope is exploring possible methods to oppose me based on his predictions of what will happen next. Not for nothing has he been opposing Potimas for so long despite being a normal human. I doubt that he's figured out everything that I'm trying to do, but he's likely preparing for any contingency. It's highly likely that coming into contact

with Yamada-kun is part of that larger plan.

In which case, wouldn't it be better to peek as much as possible? I think so. I'm like the pope in that I'm the type to predict all sorts of scenarios and make flawless preparations before starting the fight. Therefore, if trouble is going to sprout, the correct thing to do is to nip it in the bud ahead of time. With Potimas now dead, the pope is one of the few people who can oppose me. There's no harm in being vigilant. I mean, since the Pope has the Temperance Ruler skill, eliminating him under the cover of darkness would be the quickest solution now that the cooperative relationship formed between us until the elves were beaten is over.

But... hey... Wouldn't that simply be a one-sided game? Eliminating the pope right now is the most efficient solution. That is for certain. But, that option... is bad. What's bad you ask? Wouldn't the results of such a choice be uninteresting? Not to me. To the spectator. Exactly. For this story, that certain terrible spectator who is capable of overturning the very foundations of it would likely be bored if the ending was given away already by going with that option.

Well, that's basically why I can't take that option, even though it would be nicely efficient for me. Sigh. That evil god really is a good-for-nothing. She definitely doesn't want me to have it easy.

Yeah. I know. It's unlikely to be smooth sailing from here on. That's why I've even made careful preparations for some detours. It's okay. It should go well. I'll believe in my own power.

Righteo! In that case, I'm cancelling peeping on the pope. Let's do something else.

That being said, there's not much I can do right now I guess. Since Yamada-kun and co are gone, resuming the debriefing session with the reincarnators wouldn't work. Mera and co are working hard on the post-war efforts anyway. Even if I use my main body to assist with hacking the System, my clones are always working on it anyway.

The hacking of the System is going well. Under my original expectations I had thought I'd need imouto-chan to take Chastity, but with the hacking

having progressed this far, that wasn't even necessary. It was a bit heavy-handed, but I was able to interfere with the Ruler Authority and gain control over it. So the unoccupied Ruler Authority for Chastity fell into my hands and I was able to grab Diligence that was held by Potimas immediately following his death. By gaining her consent I was able to receive both Gluttony and Humility from the Demon King. The only one remaining is the pope's Temperance. The remaining one is the problem though. I'm more or less able to continue making progress by being heavy-handed, but the efficiency is bad. Well, either way, I guess it's at the point where I just need to persist with it a bit more.

Since the System hacking is currently going well, if there's a problem to speak of, then it would be sensei I guess. The other recinarantors are still able to recover. Since they were simply confined in the elf village, their minds and bodies are perfectly healthy. However, even though sensei's body is healthy, her mind is not. I guess I'll go see how she's doing.

Translation notes:

"If you say that you'll win anyway then you mustn't cheat" – the more literal translation of the title is "If you declare that you'll capture on your first attempt then you can't look at strategy guides". A sort-of gamers equivalent of "you can't have your cake and eat it".



# Chapter 325: It's not sensei's fault!

On returning to the room in the elf village, there was sensei, sitting on top of the bed grasping her knees. It, it's dusk. Since elves age slowly, looking at sensei sitting while grasping her knees like that, it's like seeing a primary school girl being sad over having missed a snack. Ahh, what to do. This is supposed to be a serious scene, yet it's as charming as a painting.

Also, just next to her, Felmina-chan and Kushitani-san are seated on chairs having a friendly conversation. Or rather, not so much a friendly conversation as it feels like Felmina-chan is firing a barrage of questions at Kushitani-san. As I teleport directly into the room amongst these three very different people, all their gazes shift to me.

「Wakaba-san.」

Sensei sluggishly raises her head and mutters that.

「How are you feeling?」

I decided to start off by asking a harmless and inoffensive question. On doing so, Felmina-chan stared at me with wide-open eyes. What's with that face? I will talk when it's time to talk! It's just that normally I'm not serious is all! Once I get serious then even I can do it!

「My body is fine. Thanks for worrying about me.」

Her body is, eh. In other words, emotionally she still has a long way to go.

「Please do not force yourself. After all, there is no longer any need for you to take risks, sensei.」

In order to console her, I speak to her as gently as possible. Felmina-chan is making a face like she's about to froth at the mouth and collapse. What's with that face? Even I have a fragment of kindness within me you know! Or rather, I'm actually super-kind okay! It's just that everyone is strange for not realising that you know!

「Thank you very much.」

Even though sensei is thanking me, she doesn't recover her spirits. It seems like my words weren't enough to clear her mood. Even so, the only thing I can do here is to carry on talking.

「Sensei, there is no need for you to worry about it. You took action based on what you thought was good. It was Potimas who was at fault for trying to make use of your good intentions.」

In practice, sensei has not committed anything wrong. There is the stock phrase that swindlers use to say that those who are deceived are at fault, but it's obvious that those who deceive are at fault. Sensei simply did everything that she could possibly do. That surely saved the reincarnators for a start, and everyone is safe since Potimas's plot was crushed before it could be implemented. So it turned out alright in the end.

「However, that doesn't change the fact that I was an accomplice to Potimas.」

Despite all that, sensei continues to worry about it. Hrm. Sensei's sense of responsibility is too strong. By nature she burdens herself with responsibilities that she doesn't need to carry and so she suffers because of it. Just because she is their sensei, it doesn't mean that she has the responsibility of having to save the reincarnators, yet she took desperate action using the elves, meaning that when Potimas betrayed her she felt responsible for that as well. She burdens herself with far too many unnecessary things. It makes me think that she should live a more easygoing life. But well, that's exactly what's good about sensei though.

「That is clearly your wrong impression, sensei. You were simply being deceived. You have not done anything wrong at all. Besides, I'd rather not say this, but whether you were there or not, so long as Potimas was around he would have done something bad sooner or later. Regardless of your actions, that man needed to be dealt with because he was going to take hold of the total energy of the world some day. It was simply your misfortune to be born at that man's side.」

It is Potimas who is to blame. In general things are his fault. This is the truth.

「In other words, it was a mistake that I was even born then huh.」

Gahh!? How did you get to that conclusion!?

「That's wrong. I've said it over and over, but you are not at fault, sensei.」

I immediately denied it, but sensei stayed downcast. Ehhh, ahhh, uhhh.  
What should I do?

I shift my gaze to Felmina-chan and Kushitani-san as a request for help. Felmina-chan gently averted her gaze. Kushitani-san breathed a small sigh and shrugged her shoulders. Damn! They're of no use!

「Don't look at me like that please. It's not like I am aware of all of the details for a start and we were also the last ones to come to this elf village. Since both my circumstances and viewpoint is different to everyone else's there's nothing that I can say.」

Kushitani-san starts giving excuses. Well, whether they're excuses or not what she's saying is true though. Kushitani-san and Tagawa-kun both spent a long time outside of the elf village. Accordingly, that means that the amount of interaction that they had with sensei was brief and they had also not experienced much time being restricted in the elf village. Compared to the reincarnators who spent their entire lives confined to the elf village from when they were small, their viewpoint is indeed different. So she wouldn't be able to give an objective opinion.

「Well, going by what I've heard I also think that sensei is not at fault though. Isn't this simply a matter of sensei's own feelings? What I think is that sensei herself has to think through and sort out her own feelings about herself.」

.....Are we really the same age? Well, actually, if our past lives are included then she's older than me I guess. There I go escaping from reality again, but in truth Kushitani-san is mature compared to the other reincarnators. When sensei collapsed earlier, she was the first one to move as well. Since Kushitani-san has been around the world as an adventurer, she has proportionally wide experiences, so I guess mentally she has grown up? Well, compared to the reincarnators who've been spending time in this stagnant elf village, she's been through quite a lot.

「So there you have it sensei. I'll stay at your side until you're able to sort out your feelings and recover, so I think it's fine to slowly ponder things.」

「Kushitani-san, aren't you saying that because you want to take things slowly yourself?」

「Oh my? Did you see through me perhaps?」

Kushitani-san smiles mischievously. Following that infectious smile, sensei also smiled briefly.

Hmm-mm? How strange. Wasn't this supposed to be the scene where I gallantly take sensei's troubles away? Kushitani-san has run away with it all, huh? How strange. It's totally strange! So as to ask just what's going on here, I turn my gaze to Felmina-chan. But she stubbornly refuses to look my way!

While I'm being overwhelmed with a strange sense of defeat, the others suddenly have a surprised expression. Hm? When I quickly glance at the others, sensei and Kushitani-san and also Felmina-chan are all gazing at nothing and have an attitude like they are listening carefully. Then, their expressions change from being surprised. To being grim. Their gazes shift, to me.

Ah. So it has come huh.

I send an order to the clones hacking the System. Try looking at the personal history of the Voice of Heaven (temp). Considering the reaction of the three people here, I think they probably received some kind of revelation from the Voice of Heaven (temp). And there – bingo. Hmm, so what's what?

A World Quest is issued: Will you obstruct or will you support the plan of the Evil God who is scheming to sacrifice humanity in order to avert the destruction of the world?

Argh, damn you D. You sure have intervened in a big way.

Translation notes:

“sitting while grasping her knees” – this is a specific pose often used to

evoke sad or melancholy type feelings, such as in this example.

“I will talk when it’s time to talk” – as a general comment on Shiro’s speech patterns lately: for most of the series, when she spoke at all she used extremely brief sentences, often with just one or two words. In this chapter Shiro is speaking complete and proper sentences every time. Her speech patterns are actually very close to D’s, though slightly more colloquial.

“World Quest” – the way this is written indicates that it is a gaming term.

Shameless Advertisement: Memes aren't something one considers when writing isekai novels...But this...hehehe...does put a smile on my face.

## S34: Turning Point

As we followed the pope of the Divine Word Religion, we arrived at a reception room. In the middle was a refined table, with sofas placed spaciously around it. On sitting down in one of those sofas, he encouraged us to sit down in the sofa on the opposite side. Katia hesitated for a moment to sit down, but I sat down without concern. I felt that it was meaningless to be on guard here for a start, and to be honest I felt so unwell that merely standing up was painful.

I was sitting in the middle of the sofa, directly opposite the pope, when Sue sat next to me while pressing her body against mine. That position just happened to block Katia who was still standing. If Sue sits there, then Katia can't sit. I was about to suggest that she sits opposite me, but after glancing at Sue for a moment, Katia briskly walked around the sofa, taking the seat next to mine and opposite Sue. It seemed that she was sitting unnecessarily close to me though. I felt uncomfortable at the pope's knowing gaze.

The women who had accompanied the pope here began to make preparations. They brought out some tea with a nice scent and laid that on the table in front of us with some light snacks. Once they completed that, the women left the room. The only ones remaining were the pope and us. Even when I tried searching, I couldn't find the presence of anyone within the room. It would be another thing if there was someone here whose concealment ability exceeded my perception ability, but at least as far as I can see there is nobody else here. Isn't this a bit too careless?

「Are you sure about being here all alone?」

「Indeed. It does not bother me at all.」

I cannot grasp the true meaning of the pope's calm reply. Just what is this? When in front of this person, I just can't compose myself. It's of a different kind to when I faced Wakaba-san, but I can feel something unfathomable. It feels as if I'm facing a giant ball of cotton. It seems easy enough to set it on fire, yet it wouldn't be affected in the slightest by

striking it. Something so fragile and yet it could repel anything, is the vague feeling I'm getting.

「That's right. How about we start with you trying Appraisal on me? That should serve as proof that I'm not being brainwashed or similar. I've made it possible for you to see it now, so go ahead.」

It is considered rude to use Appraisal on people. This tendency is particularly strong for nobles. I can agree that it is indeed impolite if having your status values read is considered to be an invasion of privacy. For someone who has become the pope, it would surely wouldn't be a frequent occurrence to be Appraised by others. Is he perhaps trying to show his good faith by that alone?

「Then, excuse me.」

For the time being, thinking that it's best to sweep away even the smallest doubt, I attempt to use Appraisal on him.

『Human LV1 Name Dustin

Status

**HP:** 34／34 (Green)

**MP:** 29／29 (Blue)

**SP:** 21／21 (Yellow)

**:** 19／22 (Red)

Average Offensive Ability: 27 (details)

Average Defensive Ability: 25 (details)

Average Magic Ability: 33 (details)

Average Resistance Ability: 34 (details)

Average Speed Ability: 23 (details)

Skills

「SP Consumption Down LV4」 「Magic Perception LV3」 「Magic Manipulation LV3」 「Concentration LV10」 「Thought Super Acceleration

LV2]「Foresight LV8]「High-speed Calculation LV10]「Memory LV10]  
「Cooperation LV2]「Command LV3]「Distant Speech LV2]「Appraisal  
LV10]「Harmony]「Light Magic LV3]「Holy Light Magic LV1]「Treatment  
Magic LV3]「Miracle Magic LV1]「Poison Resistance LV8]「Sleep Nullity]  
「Pain Nullity]「Sense of Pain Alleviation LV2]「Enhanced Vision LV3]  
「Enhanced Hearing LV3]「Enhanced Smell LV2]「Enhanced Taste LV1]  
「Enhanced Touch LV1]「Life LV5]「Magic Amount LV4]「Agility LV2]  
「Endurance LV2]「Powerful LV2]「Sturdy LV2]「Magician LV3]「Protection  
LV3]「Dash LV2]「Dignity LV4]「Temperance]「Taboo LV10]

Skill points : 0

Titles

「Ruler of Temperance]「Reincarnated One]「Leader]「King]「Rescuer]  
「Saint]]

What the heck, is this? The pope's Appraisal result, was just too strange. Not only was his status values low but almost all his skills are considered non-combatant ones. No, it's not like this can't be reasonable. Just because he's the head of the incredibly large organisation called the Divine Word Religion, it doesn't necessarily follow that high combat ability would be a requirement. To stand above others, he was chosen for his mental abilities rather than his physical abilities – I guess that's how things are with the pope.

However, that was all a trivial matter. No matter what, I couldn't overlook two skills – Temperance and Taboo LV10.

「Taboo is.....」

I muttered that without thinking. Within the Divine Word Religion, the possession of Taboo by itself is supposed to be considered an unpardonable sin. That is something I knew because Yuri, who was both a fellow reincarnator and a Saint candidate, would go on about it with bloodshot eyes. The Divine World Religion considers people who hold the Taboo skill to be absolutely unforgivable.

Yet despite that, the person at the top of the Divine Word Religion not only has the Taboo skill but at maximum level? What kind of joke is this?



「Precisely because I know about Taboo is why I cannot allow it to be spread. Surely you understand that as well?」

「Wha!?!」

Although the subject of his question was left out, the pope seemed to be convinced – that I had Taboo at level 10. How does he even know that? I got Taboo to level 10 when I resurrected Anna at the elf village. Not only should the pope be unaware of that due to not being there, I never even told anyone that I had Taboo in the first place and since I was scrupulously careful there's no way it should have leaked. Despite all that, how does the pope know about it?

Perhaps it's because I let out a garbled response in a panic, but the pope's smile becomes deeper. Ah! Am I stupid or what!? Given my behaviour, isn't that basically like I'm accepting that the pope's words are correct!? In fact, Katia and Sue are now looking at me in surprise. Don't tell me... he was tricking me into revealing the truth?

「Heh heh. Please don't make such an expression. Since it would help make the discussion easier if you already knew about Taboo, I simply wanted to confirm it. It's already no longer any concern of ours as to whether you possess Taboo. That stage has passed by long ago.」

Matching the pope's words, I cannot sense any malicious intent from the pope towards us. But, I couldn't decide whether it would be a good idea to trust him or not. Considering this tough elderly man, I got the feeling that if that calm smile was concealing any malice then I still wouldn't be able to spot it.

「Taboo is the memory of our sin.」

The pope erased his smile, closed his eyes and spoke calmly.

「We committed that sin in the past. Taboo is the record. Precisely because it is something that one is forced to remember, is why it is taboo. We must atone for that sin.」

——Atone.

Even now, that coercion continues to emanate from Taboo. Perhaps the

pope sincerely accepts that and takes action accordingly then?

「However, people are weak. They crush their awareness of their sins, fleeing down the easy route instead of atoning. Even if that means erasing themselves. They believe that it is easier to surrender themselves to the urge to want to erase themselves, rather than enduring years of pain. Thus, I had to keep them from knowing about Taboo.」

That... might be the case. When I consider that this discomfort will continue forever, even I get depressed. Even I as a reincarnator who has absolutely no connection to the past of this world. From the point of view of those people who have in fact always lived in this world, they couldn't see it as someone else's problem and might well suffer more than me.

In the Taboo menu, there is a record of one's personal reincarnation history. For me, that entry is simply empty. Because my previous life was not spent on this world, it is outside of the System's perview, so it has no record of it. However, that's not the case for the people of this world. This personal reincarnation history has the complete records of that person's past lives. The records made since the System was created. How were you born within the System? From since the System was created until now, just how did you live? Everything is exposed.

——Atone.

Together with that thought. It's fair to call it a record of sin. I can understand that people would rather crush that down rather than being forced to see such things and be continuously coerced to atone. In fact, precisely because such people exist, that is why the pope regarded Taboo as dangerous and harshly cracked down on people with the skill. In order to protect them.

「However, this has to be remembered sooner or later. Since the debt of our sins has not been paid off, our worn-out souls cannot even cope with the built-up interest and we are approaching bankruptcy before our very eyes.」

With his eyes still closed, the pope turned his face upwards. At that moment.

『A World Quest is issued: Will you obstruct or will you support the plan of the Evil God who is scheming to sacrifice humanity in order to avert the destruction of the world?』

The familiar voice of the Divine Word resounded directly inside my head. At the same time, what floated up in my mind was a white figure seen from behind.

「What... the?」

It was so abrupt that I couldn't organise my thoughts. I immediately turned to look at Katia, and Katia also had her brows wrinkled while looking serious. Turning to my other side, Sue seemed a bit out of it, but she also seemed to grasp it. Given their reactions, it certainly doesn't seem to be the case that the Divine Words just now could only be heard by me.

「So it has begun huh.」

Then, the pope who was the only one here who had maintained his composure, wearily muttered that in a tired voice.

「What do you mean, it has begun?」

「The time has come to make a choice.」

After I asked that before I could think, the pope calmly faced forwards and opened his eyes in response. I was overawed... by the unwavering glint in the pope's eyes. I felt that I was seeing true strength in this old man who had far lower status values than me and had almost no combat ability at all, yet his body contained an indomitable will.

「We the people must make a choice. Shall we repay the great kindness that was received from the gods with ingratitude in order to survive? Or shall we repent our own sins while being destroyed?」

Katia and Sue, who didn't know the contents of Taboo, weren't able to follow the conversation. Even so, perhaps they understood that something terrible was occurring, or perhaps they were pressured by grave spirit of the pope, as they had become stiff with tension. I was also in a similar state.

「In order for people to survive, I will sacrifice the revered god of the

Divine Word and oppose the evil god. That is why I said that the Divine Word Religion is finished.」

That was an outrageous declaration, as if overturning heaven and earth.

「Hero Shurein. Which will you choose? The people or the gods? Which of them should be allowed to survive?」

# Chapter 327: I wish I had the Persuasion skill!

Oi, oi, oooi! Hey, Miss D, isn't your timing just really awful? I've not yet been able to explain our situation to the reincarnators properly, then you toss a bomb into this situation that is stuffed with suspicion. Well naturally, anyone would be doubtful. If our positions had been reversed I'd be thinking "woah this person is bad news!"

「What is the meaning of this?」

Sensei asks me that with trembling lips. She had been incapacitated until just earlier, so her lips were pallid. Since she is now aware of the hidden true side of the elves, sensei is on unsteady ground and currently doesn't know what to believe. It wouldn't be surprising if she now doubted all the information that she has heard. My original plan had been to slowly win over sensei's confidence and have her transfer the Ruler Authority of Charity over to me. So doesn't this mean that a mission which already had a high degree of communication difficulty has gotten even harder!?

That's right. Sensei, you had the one of the Ruler skills didn't you - Charity. On top of that you had taken control of the Ruler Authority as well. In a way, I'm at even more of a loss as to what to do about you than the pope. I'm being blunt here! I've got no plan at all when it comes to sensei! Well, I mean, you know? I'm at a total loss as to what to do about you!

The pope is easy to understand, right? That person will never waver of course. While being strong-minded is worthy of respect, in a situation where you don't agree with each other, no matter how great a person they are all you gotta do is confront them head-on.

But sensei is different. Unlike the pope, she's not taking action based on a full understanding of the situation and instead she has lived thus far based on Potimas's ulterior motives and having crossed paths with the reincarnators. Of course, the reincarnators being taken into protection

was according to sensei's own will, but it goes without saying that there were other intentions at work. Various things were twisted by Potimas. While sensei does have Ruler Authority, she doesn't have accurate knowledge about the world and simply took action for the sake of the reincarnators. Because of that, when it comes time to explain what is going to happen to the world from now on, frankly I cannot predict how she will react. That's exactly why I had intended to slowly take time to explain things to her and have her hand over the Ruler Authority. That's all my plan boils down to! In other words, I have no plan for what to do in the current situation! Time for Plan B! Ahhh!? There's no such thing!

What'll I do? Seriously, what'll I do?

「Sensei, stay calm. Wakaba-san, you too. There's no rush but I would like an explanation of the situation though.」

Kushitani-san works to calm down sensei, and while at it also allows me to compose myself. You're a capable woman, Kushitani-san!

That's right. Let's calm down for while. Firstly, for me to verbally explain everything is... impossible! There's no way that someone tongue-tied like me can explain everything from start to finish. Particularly with these momentous yet super complicated circumstances.

Thus, the option of verbally explaining it is rejected! I can't do what I can't do. It's human to know when to give up. Okay I'm not human, but don't mind such trivial details. Rather than getting hung up on what I can't do, it's more efficient to switch course to a different plan.

Gnn. Without explaining things verbally, is there a way I can communicate the situation without being misunderstood? Ah, there is.

I give an additional project to my clones working in another dimension. They promptly carry it out, delivering the finished product here via space transition. I'm now holding a single book in my hands.

This book was created by turning my threads into paper. This bookmaking began as a way to convey orders to the pope or Argnar, but this technique has been refined so that it's capable of creating a book in an instant. As things are now, I'm confident that this could fill a library

within a day you know. Don't go creating useless techniques? Well, it turned out to be useful in practice though!

Sensei and Kushitani-san are surprised to see the book suddenly appear in my hands. Felmina-chan, who has been erasing her presence, is used to this sort of thing and isn't surprised. I hold out the book to sensei, who nervously accepted it.

「Should I read this?」

I nod. Since I created that book in a hurry, things like the information contained within Taboo or what I am going to do from now on are written out without concealing anything. That's because I think that if I made a poor attempt at glossing over things, then it would likely just cause trouble in the future. Will sensei now cooperate with me, or perhaps reject me? I won't be able to find that out without lifting the lid on this information. However, whatever happens, that is sensei's choice. I will respect her decision. In addition... if she decides to stand in my way, then I better resolve myself for the worst.

Sensei's gaze switches back and forth between the book and myself. However, once she realises that I'm not about to show any other reaction, she made up her mind to open the book and began to read. It will take some time for sensei to finish reading, but I'll wait here until then.

Snap – suddenly that dull sound resounded from inside of me.

I lose all the strength in my body, but the hand grasping my neck doesn't allow me to fall down. The hand that had suddenly appeared behind me had seized my neck and smashed the bones. As if it was somebody else's problem, I realised the situation.

「I've no doubt that wasn't enough to kill you.」

I hear a voice from behind me. It's a voice that I've heard before. Or rather, there's only one person on this planet that I'm aware of who is capable of doing this.

I'm violently pulled backwards by my seized neck. Since my neck, or to be precise the part of my body that transmits instructions from my brain

to my body has been destroyed, I'm currently unable to resist that. I might be a god but if my flesh is destroyed then that's enough to be real damage. Since I'm a newbie god, that's all the more prominent. My focus might have been on sensei, but to think I actually received a surprise attack. Perhaps I've gotten rusty without realising it.

I'm dragged backwards, then tossed to the side. However, the place where I fall is not the tree house in the elf village that I was just in, but onto a road in a modern looking town that I've never seen before. Space transition. Or rather, I guess this is not somewhere in the real world, but a zone created in another dimension. While quickly performing recovery on my injured neck, on looking up I saw the expected man with jet-black armour that fits him like clothes. Administrator, Kuro, Gyuriedistodiez.

「Do you remember what I told you before?」

Kuro asks me that while looking down on me. Even if you say that, I don't know what time you're referring to you know.

「If you attempt to do something irreconcilable with my beliefs, then I will surely stand in your way.」

There's no way that my thoughts reached him, but Kuro repeated what he had said back then without pause. That was what Kuro had said to me when he came visiting right after I had left the Elro Great Labyrinth.

「It seems that time has come.」

Saying so, Kuro takes a stance.

No, no, no! Excuse me but isn't this development a bit too fast!? This development wasn't within my expectations! This and everything is D's fault! Damn you D!



# Chapter 328: To put it in Black and White

Well, I knew something like this would probably happen eventually. At the end of the day, we each have our differences in what we are giving top priority to. The Demon King and I prioritise the Goddess's existence. Kuro and the Goddess prioritise the Goddess's will. We are disregarding the Goddess's will in order to save the Goddess's existence. Kuro and the Goddess are willing to allow the Goddess's existence to vanish in order to respect the Goddess's will. So long as those things are in opposition, then it's inevitable that we will clash.

But enough already! Even so, I think this is rather cruel!

I roll to the side to avoid Kuro's leg that he was swinging down to try to smash me. THUD! That loud sound was Kuro's leg caving into the ground where I had been until a moment ago. The perfectly level ground is cracked. Don't look at that lightly merely because the ground wasn't smashed into smithereens. This is a fake world created by Kuro. If you think that the normal laws of physics apply, then you'll be in for a world of hurt. Most likely, if that had hit me then all the bones in my body would have been smashed.

While rolling to the side, I spring myself up by pushing my hands against the ground. The bones in my neck are healed. But, stop attacking me already!

I somehow avoid Kuro's fist that's approaching my face by bending the top of my body backwards! Ina Bauer! Or maybe The Matrix! I continue leaning backwards and make a bridge by touching my hands to the ground! I scarper by using the running style from The Exorcist! Gross? As if I care about such things now!

Excuse me Mister Kuro, aren't you rather lacking in leniency here!? Starting from a surprise attack to pulling me into your domain, followed by aggressive attacks that don't allow me to recover. This is not how a higher ranked person should act like! If you're a higher ranked person then act with self-conceit like a certain Goldy! You're not a mere king but

a god, right!?

While I'm legging it away, Kuro catches up to me in an instant and kicks me in the back, flinging me up into the air. GUHHOAW! I heard a sound that human bodies just aren't meant to make! This is starting to be no laughing matter you know!?

With my limbs stretched out after being kicked up into the air, Kuro punches at my body. That fist which strikes at the middle of my chest, pierces right through my body. Hah-hah-hah. I had put a defensive barrier up but it made no difference. I can only laugh.

This situation is starting to become genuinely bad. My body's movement is dull for a start and I can barely defend myself as well. The reason why my body's movement is dull is because this is Kuro's zone. With the exception of Kuro, nobody can make use of their power here. My body's movement is dull like I'm underwater.

In addition, the reason why defence is meaningless is because Kuro's barrier is erasing my barrier. This is the true dragon barrier that only true dragons possess. It's a cheat barrier that invalidates all magecraft without exception. You can use it for defence by invalidating attacks and you can use it for offence by invalidating the opponent's defence like just now. It's truly a cheat. Unfair.

While having such a cheat ability he still sprung a surprise attack on me, having made perfect preparations to kill me. This is totally not what a self-conceited higher ranked person would do. I had planned to first lure Kuro into my zone when the time came for us to have our showdown, yet isn't this the complete opposite of all that? Nai wa.

Sigh. Complaining will get me nowhere. There's no point in crying over spilt milk. There were too many unexpected things, but this doesn't change what I have to do.

Beat down Kuro and activate my world rehabilitation plan.

「Mnh.」

I grab Kuro's arm that had pierced my chest. At the same time I change

my lower body into spider form, slashing at him with the sickle on my foreleg. Kuro shook off my hands, pulling out his arm and falling back. Due to the effect of the zone dulling the movement of the sickle, he could comfortably avoid it. Since he has the dragon barrier up, he probably wouldn't have had any problems even if he hadn't avoided it though. I guess that goes to show just how on guard he is against me huh.

Well, thanks to that I was able to open some distance between us. But since this is Kuro's zone, there's not actually much meaning in opening up some distance. After all, this zone created by a god is sort of like being inside that god. It's advantageous for you, disadvantageous for the opponent. As long as I am here Kuro will have the upper hand.

Well, it's not like I can just allow myself to be beaten up the whole time though.

With a rustling sound, many white spiders come crawling out from the shadow beneath me. Many, many spiders. As if they are wearing away space itself, the white spiders warp the zone wherever they come out.

「Oh no you don't!」

Kuro charges forwards in a stance ready to make a punch, but the white spiders scatter in all directions. Of course, the main body in myself also falls back and avoids Kuro's strike. The white spiders that had scattered in all directions begin to summon other white spiders, and those white spiders summon even more white spiders. The white spiders increase in numbers geometrically. They begin to tear into Kuro's zone.

「So much?」

Snicker snicker! Did you think I was just letting myself be beaten silly huh!? ... That's a lie. I seriously was being beaten silly, pretty much. However, I had properly arranged for my clones to take action like this to invade Kuro's zone from outside! The hole that had opened in my chest is returning to normal. Heh, the real battle starts here! I'll leave me getting beaten silly out from my blog!

「Damn!」

Kuro clicks his tongue. He rushes towards my main body, but I keep falling further backwards and don't allow him to close the distance. It's a competition between how fast Kuro can attack and how fast I can retreat. The dullness in my body's movements have now gone.

In a battle between two users of space magecraft, it's like a battle to secure territory. Expand your own zone, or protect against your opponent expanding their own zone. Right now, my clones in the white spiders are blotting out Kuro's zone at a terrific rate, converting it to my zone.

Muhahaha! I didn't thoroughly research this for nothing! Don't look down on a specialist!

Yeah, I will acknowledge it. I'm no match for Kuro in total power. It's also the case that I was in a bad situation with that surprise attack. Or rather, as matter of fact, in that exchange just now I lost quite a lot of my magic power. Kuro's surprise attack was highly successful dammit.

But, but still! I've trained myself thoroughly the whole time since I became a god while focusing on you. It would be embarrassing if I fell so easily.

It also wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the outcome of this battle will decide this world's future. Now then, let's settle things here why don't we!

.....I better take out some insurance though.

# Chapter 329: How to kill a god

As Kuro chases me at high speed I escape by retreating at the same speed. During that time my clones also continue to summon more clones, overwriting Kuro's zone. I'm relieved to be able to say that I seem to be a step above in using Space Magecraft. If I lost at this then I wouldn't have a chance. If I couldn't compete with Space Magecraft at the very least, then I would be in checkmate at that point after all.

If you recall my pathetic state immediately after I was dragged into this zone, you can see just how brutal these zones are indeed. It's like putting a buff on yourself and putting a debuff on your opponent, as it were. If you don't have some method of resisting that, then you'll be totally screwed. Thus, Space Magecraft is an essential ability for gods. As per D's carefully made Basic Course of God.

That is merely the prerequisites to fight a higher ranked god. That's only enough to get you to the starting line. Unless you're equal to or superior in Space Magecraft, then you don't even have the capabilities to fight at all. I'm happy at the fact that I surpass him in that, but even that has been cancelled out by the damage I took from the initial surprise attack, pretty much. The delay in my initial response has equally delayed the expansion of my zone. While I am able to erode Kuro's zone, the rate feels pedestrian. So unless I'm prepared for a drawn-out battle, it'll be impossible to completely overwrite it.

So, my immediate situation is basically... REALLY bad. The prerequisites are to be equal to or superior in Space Magecraft. I was able to satisfy that. However, that surprise attack left a delay in my initial response when originally I had planned to lure him into my zone, but this is starting from me being in Kuro's zone instead. In addition, Kuro is higher ranked. In order for someone lower ranked like me to beat Kuro, I absolutely must use my field to maneuver myself into an advantageous position. Because I haven't achieved that, I'm in deep shit.

「Ugh!？」

The threads that had been spread out between the many buildings here wrap around Kuro's body. This is a spider web that my clones had prepared beforehand. Of course, it's nothing like a normal web. This thread contains Space Magecraft making it almost impossible to sever physically. Once you're caught in this, you cannot escape. Or at least, that's how it's supposed to go.

Kuro casually swings his arm. That's all it takes for the threads I take pride in to snap, annihilating the web. That damn cheat barrier! My threads are made by magecraft. In other words, by totally eliminating all magecraft without exception, it doesn't work on Kuro's dragon barrier. I knew all that, but does this mean I won't get to show the amusing spectacle of a god strung up and immobilised by my threads then? Okay, fine. Well, I had somewhat hoped to be able to do that, more or less, but my main reason was to buy some time though.

During the tiny pause while Kuro was distracted by my threads, I gain some further distance between us. For now I'll somehow play for time, giving priority to overwriting Kuro's zone with my zone. It won't be too late to go on the counterattack afterwards. Or rather, I can't until then.

My hand has too few cards that I can play. This would be probably considered too pitiful a hand to use to claim to be a god. All I have is Space Magecraft, my clones and my Evil Eyes. Just that. Use magecraft to create my own zone, trap them in My Home and shower them with countless Evil Eyes from my clones simultaneously. You could say that this is pretty much the only attack method that I have available. You could also say that in the brief time that I had to prepare, that this method was the only one that I was able to develop that is capable of contending with a real god. Currently, my clones are putting everything into the construction of My Home.

Since I have just one type of attack, if that can be countered then I would no longer have any chance of winning. I'd like to believe that it can't be countered so easily, but it's definitely not impossible. This is why I didn't want to show this if possible, back when I was fighting with Potimas's weapons. Going by Kuro's actions, he doesn't have a countermeasure for

my Evil Eyes. While that does give me some peace of mind, that's also why he began with a surprise attack in order to gain an early advantage as well. Yep. Simple but super effective. Thanks to that, My Home and my Evil Eyes have been blocked and I've been forced onto the defensive.

However, looking at it from another perspective, this means that I should somehow be able to overturn the unfavourable situation that I've been placed into. That surprise attack cost me a lot of magic power, but that's done with now that I've got back on my feet. To be honest, considering that I had resigned myself to the possibility that in the worst case one strike might kill me instantly, being done with it while having taken only that much damage is stroke of luck. Kuro's offensive abilities aren't higher than I thought. Considering that he's attempting to draw closer, it seems unlikely that he's good at long distance attacks. He has the dragon barrier as well, so it seems that Kuro is a god specialised in defence.

Gods are absurd beings. After all, even if you injure them they can simply recover in an instant. My body that Kuro injured has already completely returned to normal. It's incredibly difficult to deal with a god purely with physical means. You can smash their heart or cut off their head, but they'll soon recover back to normal after all. Of course, if you're able to cut their head off, even a god will lose the ability to think for a moment. However, since they would have prepared for such things in advance, it's simple enough for them to automatically recover. Even I have prepared for that, so of course those who call themselves gods would definitely have prepared for such things.

There's many different methods available to defeat such a god. These fall into two main categories. To wear them down and to break their soul. The two examples I know of to break the soul are Heresy Attack and Abyss Magic. D casually included ways to defeat a god. I'm neither excited or attracted by that. What the fuck is that person doing!? So anyway, those methods are too high level for me and I can't use them. D casually lets people who aren't even gods use them. I'm neither excited or attracted by that. What the fuck is that person doing!? This is important so I'm saying

it twice.

The soul is the very nucleus of living beings. Even a god can't survive their soul being broken. Or rather, the soul is like the main body of a god anyway. According to the Basic Course of God, this is how battles between gods typically go. Possess methods to break the soul and methods to defend against that. Determine a good way to strike the opponent, then wait for a good moment to use it. Something like that. But, I can't even do that! Since I pretty much became a god by using a trick, there's none worse than me.

So in short, the methods I can use are from the other category. To wear them down. To wear what down you ask? Their energy.

Energy is what powers gods. If you consider the soul to be like the heart for a god, then energy is like their blood. They use that to perform various miracles. Being able to regenerate their body instantly from damage for example, is by using energy. If they exhaust their energy, then of course they can no longer do that. In short, they die. Through my Evil Eyes, I'm specialised in stealing that energy. As if I had injected them with poison, the opponent slowly becomes worn down.

But you know. This method has a problem. Which is this – gods are a bunch who have a vast amount of energy stored up, right? And so, it means I gotta drain all that energy, right? That's gonna take forever, right?

That's how it is. This method of wearing them down takes a LOAD of time. On top of that Kuro has the dragon barrier. While I doubt he can completely defend against my Evil Eyes, the rate at which he's worn down will get slower no matter what. On top of that, I'm having a hard enough time just with constructing My Home in preparation for that. Neither Kuro or I have the firepower to take out the other in an instant.

Thus, we can deduce the following conclusion. We're plunging into a super drawn-out battle. Our fight is just beginning!



# Chapter 330: It might be plain to describe but actually doing it is really hard

I'm chased. I run away. I use obstructions.

Yep. This is repeating. What? Wadda ya mean the depiction stinks? You can say it all you want but I can't do anything about it anyway. There's not really anything worth talking about, okay.

Fine, there are some changes that come with the passage of time. Moment by moment my clones encroach onto Kuro's zone, so little by little their influence strengthens. On top of that, as Kuro is also obstructing that, the rate of progress is at a tortoise pace. Of course Kuro knows that if his zone is completely overwritten then it'll be bad for him, so he's using the power of his zone to slow the movements of my clones. It's really plain but this is still a proper fight. I just can't describe it properly. After all, it's plain.

In the first place it seems likely to take a heck of a long time to paint over Kuro's zone. I've been running around all over the place for a while now but is there no end in sight to the zone? Whee, it's huuuge! Nai wa. No matter hard my clones push to erode it, doesn't it seem impossible to paint over the whole thing? I don't know how big this thing is in practice, but at the current pace I doubt this will end in a day or two. But hey, "a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step" and all that, right? Emotionally it feels like picking up the gravel along a thousand mile journey one by one and then painting them. That way I'll repaint those thousand miles in a new colour. Hehe, I've not advanced a single step yet.

But anyway, while it might look like a plain battle visually, I'm actually super serious about doing it okay!? Look, consider a marathon or similar, if you simply look at it it's just a contest about running on and on, yeah? But, for the athletes themselves they're having to keep running through an awful lot of pain though. This is the same! It might seem plain, but I'm seriously battling with my life on the line here, so don't call it plain! I can't help it seeming plain and taking a long time, but this is a life and death

situation for me you jerk!

Ah man, seriously. This sure is taking a long time. Just how many days is it going to take to reach a damn conclusion, I wonder. If it goes badly maybe a month. It won't take a whole year, surely. Or rather, this taking a long time is actually worse for Kuro anyway.

I don't know how much of my plan has been figured out by Kuro, but the longer this takes the more advantageous it is for me. At any rate, while this is going on I'm still continuing with hacking the System after all. With enough time I will be able to gain complete control over the System, upon which I'll immediately collapse the System, using the energy that the System was preserving to then regenerate this planet and release the Goddess. In doing so, skills and status values will be stripped from the people. The more skills they have and the higher their status values the greater the burden will be on them, and because their souls have been weakened due to multiple reincarnations they won't be able to withstand that, so they'll die. In the worst case their souls will also be extinguished.

In my forecasts, including the chaos caused by the System collapsing, the number of people who'll survive is half what it is now in the best case. The worst case? Zero, naturally. Well, see, it's like that. Well basically, the surviving people surely won't be dumb enough to do something stupid in a situation like that, hopefully. At any rate, I've put a filter on the reincarnators such that they'll survive and I plan to make sure that they won't be affected by the aftermath of the System collapsing at least, plus there's others who've helped me that I'll put through the same treatment, so there shouldn't be a situation where there's no survivors. If it still ends up with zero left, that would only be because after the System collapses everyone sits around nonchalantly doing nothing right? If they go that far it's not my problem. I won't babysit them to that extent.

The Goddess can't accept such a scenario. Which is why Kuro is taking action according to the Goddess's will. That being the case, I would expect that this stalemate situation would not be good for Kuro. The longer this takes, the closer we get to going over the time limit where I can activate my plan after all.

Hrmm. In which case, how much Kuro knows would have various effects on the current situation. Firstly, in the scenario where Kuro knows nothing. That's totally to my advantage. After all, it means I can simply keep things as they are until Kuro runs out of time. By the time Kuro will have noticed, that ship would have already sailed. Whether I win or lose, by the time we return everything would be over, the end.

Secondly, in the scenario where Kuro knows there's a time limit. We can split this scenario into two alternatives. The first alternative is one where he's waiting for an opportunity. Perhaps he has concealed some kind of killer technique that is capable of defeating me and is preparing to activate it. Or otherwise, he's playing for time like me. This alternative wouldn't be a particularly welcome situation for me. Since it means that one way or another he is advancing some strategy that I cannot detect then that's bad for me. That being said, if he has some kind of killer technique that's capable of killing me, then he should have used it first during the surprise attack, so if he's still playing for time then I don't have the slightest idea what he's using that time for. After all, I want to play for time as well. Hrmm-mm. I dunno!

The second alternative is well, I rather doubt it but one where Kuro genuinely is at a loss at how to go on the offensive. Perhaps he is aware that the more time that passes the more advantageous it is for me. However, he's not able to attack. Something like that. Well, surely not. After all, Kuro is far higher ranked than me after all. That's surely more unlikely than how things are now where I've been able to recover from the surprise attack by a rather unbelievable amount. Just what the heck are you planning? I'm scared because I can't figure it out.

Hmm. Seriously, what are you planning? In what kind of situation would it be an advantage for Kuro to play for time? Nobody on Kuro's side should be able to exceed my expectations. In which case, is there someone on Kuro's side that I'm not aware of? Even then, I can't imagine that being the case though. Have I overlooked something? Unlikely. In that case what is Kuro aiming for? Seriously... I got no idea at all!

Sigh. I guess it's no use thinking about things I don't know huh. I better

concentrate on the battle in front of me. Even if it might be plain to describe. Even if it might be plain to describe!

Oh? Kuro is preparing to teleport? Perhaps he's judged that so much distance has opened up between us that he won't be able to catch up without leaping through space? Eh? But, even so, that's a bad move you know?

Kuro activates the teleport. He's trying to link space to an area right in front of me.

「Guhah!?!」

However, I interfere with the technique. Due to that the technique is disturbed, with the resulting distortion causing Kuro to take damage as he tries to jump through space. It's like he was about to jump through an open door, when that door was locked and wouldn't open and he carried on and collided with it. The situation is completely different, but it's something along those lines. Incidentally, the cause of the door being locked was my interference with the technique.

Currently in this zone, Kuro's zones and my zones are mixed together, so it's become an unstable place where we can each obstruct the other. If you try to activate a high level space technique like teleport in such a place, it's obvious that the opponent will interfere with the technique, resulting in it failing. However, rather than it simply failing to activate, the interference will cause it to explode like just now. It could even cause major damage. For him to make such an elementary mistake, just what is going on?

Seriously... I can't figure out Kuro's intentions.

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